BOY LIFE AND LABOUR

ARNOLD FREEMAN

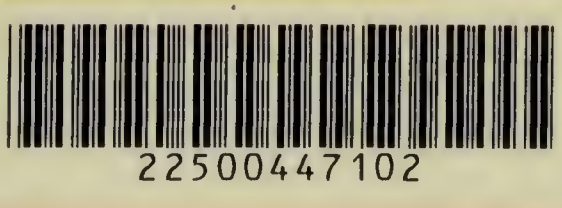
WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY
M. E. SADLER.

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BOY LIFE & LABOUR

THE MANUFACTURE OF INEFFICIENCY

BY

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LONDON

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TO

"THE ANGEL"

AUTHOR'S ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THE investigation upon which this work is based was conducted at the request of the Town Council of Birmingham. I wish here to express my thanks, especially to the Central Care Sub-Committee and the officers of the Juvenile Labour Exchange, for the facilities afforded me in making the inquiry. Responsibility for both facts and theories, it need hardly be said, attaches to the author alone.

During almost the whole of the period covered by the investigation, hospitality was afforded me by the generosity of the Council of Woodbrooke Settlement. It would be difficult to find pleasanter conditions for study than those afforded by Woodbrooke. Though not in sympathy with everything which the term "Woodbrooke Spirit" suggests, I can pay an unqualified tribute to the spirit of kindness and high-mindedness that prevails alike in teachers and in students at the Settlement. I wish I could be sure that every year of my life would introduce me into relationships with others as friendly as those offered by the year I spent there.

When I asked Dr. Sadler if he would write me a Preface, he replied that he had made a vow never to write any more prefaces for anybody! I feel, therefore, very honoured that he has generously broken faith with himself on my behalf. Those who have worked at this problem will know how much the book gains in value by including a contribution from Dr. Sadler.

Throughout the inquiry I have depended greatly,

both in the investigation and in the working up of the material, upon the experience and wisdom of others more qualified to speak upon the problems involved. I would like especially to mention Mr. Graham Wallas; Mr. Alexander Paterson; Mr. R. H. Tawney; Mr. Frederic Keeling; and Messrs. Seebohm Rowntree and B. Lasker; all of whom have assisted me considerably in different ways.

Mr. J. Cunnison, Lecturer in Economics at Woodbrooke, most kindly overhauled the whole of my manuscript. To frequent conversations with Mr. Egbert Jackson, who was working at the same time and place on another aspect of this problem, I owe a debt that the reader will do well to learn by reading Mr. Jackson's forthcoming volume. Mr. Donald Z. Stephens gave me valuable help in the early stages of the investigation, besides making many ingenious criticisms on those parts of the book relating to machinery. The chapter on Education is largely the work of Miss Edith Nora White, B.A. And, finally, my obligations are so deep to the unwearying services of my sister, Daisy Freeman, that I feel rather ashamed that her name does not also stand upon the cover.

ARNOLD FREEMAN.

6, Woodberry Down, N., London.
March 27, 1914.

PREFACE

Mr. Arnold Freeman's book is based upon a careful inquiry into the conditions of boy labour in Birmingham. He undertook the investigation at the request of the Education Committee of the Birmingham City Council and with the special encouragement of Mr. Norman Chamberlain, who has endeavoured with great success to lessen the evils of street trading in the city. Mr. Arnold Freeman's special purpose was to ascertain the causes of the deterioration in character and in earning capacity which has been observed in a great number of boys who fail to pass at once into the higher grades of labour but escape the special temptations of street trading and casual employment. He determined to take a sample of such boys when they had reached early manhood and, by close individual inquiry into their experience and circumstances, to ascertain, if possible, what causes had led to their relative failure. With the help of the officers of the Juvenile Labour Exchange, he selected from their files every boy in his seventeenth year who had been employed

in four or more posts since leaving school. This method of selection intentionally excluded those boys of special merit or exceptional opportunity who, with their faces steadily set towards the more highly paid kinds of manual work, remain as a rule in one place of employment. The nomad type of boy, on the other hand, was for the most part excluded by the adopted method of selection, because such boys do not as a rule use the Labour Exchange. Mr. Freeman secured in this way the names of 134 boys. Of these, 63 dropped out of the inquiry, either because it was found that they had given the wrong age at the Exchange, or because they were untraceable in consequence of the disappearance of their family from the last known address. It was possible, however, to follow up in detail the records of 71 boys, and it is upon the carefully analysed summaries of their experience that the main argument of the book is based. Though relatively few in number, the 71 boys about whom precise inquiry was made are believed to be typical of the mass of uneducative boy labour in Birmingham. Some of them indeed proved to be exceptional and to belong rather to the wastrel class ; but the rest of them may, in Mr. Freeman's judgment, be taken as representative of well above a half of the juvenile population of the city. He was supplied by the Labour Exchange with particulars of each boy's name, address, last school, and industrial career.

Working upon this information, he visited the schools and got from the head and assistant teachers as much information as possible about the school record of each of the boys on his list. He then made the acquaintance of their homes, noted what the parents said about the boys and their ways, acquainted himself with the boys' home surroundings, and finally talked to the boy himself, in most cases more than once, getting him to write an account of his industrial career and of the way he spends his life. The information thus gained was verified, as far as possible, from the records of the City of Birmingham Aid Society, from the files of the Children's Care Committees, and from the recollections of teachers in other schools in which the boy had been educated.

Having thus ascertained the main influences in the boys' lives, Mr. Freeman made a careful study of the conditions under which they did their work and of their ordinary amusements and recreations. The book, therefore, contains not only the outline of the lives of 71 boy workers in Birmingham, but a vivid account of the influences which have been at work in shaping the boys' future. Mr. Freeman then set himself to analyse those social and industrial conditions which lessen a boy's chance of acquiring skill and stability of purpose. This analysis has led Mr. Freeman to certain conclusions which he puts forward for the

reader's consideration in the last chapter of the book. Having shown the results of the present injurious conditions, he proposes a number of trenchant remedies.

In his method of attacking a complex and difficult subject, Mr. Arnold Freeman has followed the example of Mr. Charles Booth and of Mr. Seebohm Rowntree. He has gone straight to life. He gives the reader insight into the experience, difficulties, and personal characteristics of a number of boys whose records are typical and representative. Like many of the younger novelists, he arrests our interest by disclosing the actual experience of a number of boys during the critical years of adventurous inexperience. The evil which he sets before us is widespread wastage of early promise. The results of that wastage, when viewed from the standpoint of national welfare, are calamitous. The causes of the trouble lie deep in the texture of our social life. The shiftlessness of parents, the pressure of competitive employment, the indifference of the public, the weaknesses in the character of the boys themselves are jointly responsible for the evil. And these different responsibilities are tangled together in a web of adverse circumstances which only drastic treatment can change. No one remedy can cure the evil. And the case of girls as well as the case of boys must be dealt with in any plan of adequate reform. But, fundamentally, the cure for the

trouble lies through education, understood in a wide sense, intelligently administered and persistently applied. The necessary reform in education, however, and in the social conditions through which education works, will be costly and difficult. Mr. Arnold Freeman asks, therefore, the present generation to make a great sacrifice for the future. He calls upon us to sacrifice not only money but our immediate convenience, and to make an expenditure of energy, foresight, and administrative power not less serious than that of public funds and personal income. He has written primarily about Birmingham and about the special industrial conditions which prevail there. It has not been part of his task to discuss the problems of the textile areas or of the agricultural districts. But what he has found in Birmingham has its counterpart elsewhere, and the remedies which he suggests are applicable, with the necessary changes, to the needs of districts which, in many of their circumstances, are unlike the city where his inquiry was made.

M. E. Sadler.

May 23, 1914.

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BOY LIFE AND LABOUR.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

THE problem of Boy Labour has received considerable attention during the last few years as a phase of the problem of Unemployment. This mode of regarding it has been due to its introduction to public attention through the Reports of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and Relief of Distress, which made Unemployment a chief object of investigation.

Both the Majority and Minority Reports of the Commission regard Boy Labour, almost exclusively, as a source of Unemployment;[1] subsequent publications, neglecting the qualifications introduced into the Reports

[1] Majority Report of the Royal Commissions on the Poor Laws, Part VI. Chap. I. p. 141 :—"The great prominence given to Boy Labour, not only in our evidence, but in the various reports of our Special Investigators, leads us to the opinion that this is, perhaps, the most serious of the phenomena which we have encountered *in our study of Unemployment.*" Minority Report, *Ibid.*, Part II. Chap. IV. E. iii. :—"We regard this perpetual recruitment of the Unemployable by tens of thousands of boys who, through neglect to provide them with suitable industrial training, may almost be said to graduate into Unemployment as a matter of course, as perhaps the gravest of all the grave facts which this Commission has laid bare. We cannot believe that the nation can long persist in ignoring the fact that the Unemployed, and particularly the Underemployed and the Unemployable, are thus being daily created under our eyes."

themselves, have exaggerated the same point of view; and now the connection between Boy Labour and Unemployment seems to have unfortunately fastened itself upon the public mind to the exclusion of any other method of considering the question.

We find, for illustration, this statement in the *Economic Review* :—

> " . . . it has been universally agreed that the problem is largely caused by young people leaving school at the age of 14 with a limited amount of education and taking up ' blind-alley ' occupations, which offer them a relatively high commencing wage but a minimum of industrial training, and leave them at 17 or 18 a ' drug in the market ' incapable and impossible to absorb, except perhaps at times of unusual trade prosperity." [1]

The term " blind alley " has especially obsessed the public mind as a magic formula which sums up the whole question. The problem of Boy Labour is presented to us by this metaphor as that of large numbers of boys graduating from school into employments which are not avenues to any adult career; and we are asked to figure these unfortunates cast adrift at manhood with no alternative but casual labour or unemployment.

It is unfortunate that the connection between the problems of Unemployment and Boy Labour should have been rendered so intimate, because there is no essential interdependence. Mr. Beveridge, we may note, specifically designates his work on Unemployment as " A Problem of *Industry* " ; and every analysis of the subject has shown this phenomenon to be largely independent of the character and training of the worker, but inherent in industrial conditions. Mr. Beveridge notes that the direct value of the industrial training of youth " as a remedy for unemployment is somewhat limited—it cannot touch the causes of industrial fluctua-

[1] The *Economic Review*, Jan. 1911 ; Article on Van-Boy Labour by K. I. M. Medley.

tion or in practice prevent casual employment." [1] Thus, while the training of youth is questioned on the highest authority as a remedy for Unemployment, the treatment of the Boy Problem in this connection has served to hide aspects of it which would seem to be far more important than that of the so-called "blind alley."

The proportion of boys who suffer in the straightforward way suggested by the blind alley metaphor is an exceedingly small portion of the whole. An overwhelming majority of boys graduate from boy labour to regular adult employment; and if "the point of stress" set up at 18 or 20 were the only consideration, the evils so caused would not constitute a momentous social problem.

The real evil is far more complex and extensive; and it is associated not so much with the problem of Unemployment as with the general level of efficiency and prosperity in the community. What we need to consider is not the sacrifice of a certain number of youths through faulty industrial arrangements, *but the lack of training and the manufacture of inefficiency in the majority of boys between school and manhood.* At the present time it would seem to be the consensus of opinion of school teachers, employers, and all those who are intimate with the problem, that great masses of boys are growing up to manhood, inefficient for adult work, and incapable of performing the elementary duties of home-life and citizenship. This truer mode of regarding the problem may be illustrated by the following quotation :—

"According to the main statistical sources of information, the very serious fact emerges that between seventy and eighty per cent. of the boys leaving elementary schools enter unskilled occupations. Thus, even when the boy ultimately becomes apprenticed or enters a skilled trade, these intervening years from the national point of view are entirely wasted. Indeed the boy, naturally reacting from the discipline to which school accustomed him, usually with abundance of spare time

[1] W. H. Beveridge, "Unemployment," p. 131.

not sufficiently utilised, and without educative work, is shaped during these years directly towards evil." [1]

In the opening paragraph of their Introduction, the Consultative Committee reporting to the Board of Education, say :—

"The Committee find that at the most critical period of their lives a very large majority of the boys and girls of England and Wales are left without any sufficient guidance and care. This neglect results in great waste of early promise, in injury to character, and in the lowering of ideals of personal and civic duty." [2]

A final quotation is from the most recent work on the subject of Boy Labour :—

"He (the boy) loses the results of his training in the Elementary School ; the habits of obedience, regularity and industry are dead ; the bright intelligence is dulled, and with the coming of dulness goes the power of learning. He loses his prospects ; his future is the future of the unskilled labourer —the unskilled labourer robbed of that grit and alertness which alone secure for unskilled labour the adequate reward of permanent employment at a steady wage.

"And in thinking of this deterioration and of that hopeless future which that deterioration involves, we must never forget that it is not a mere handful of lads who suffer in this way, but that half the boys who leave the Elementary School start on this dreary journey, and so starting, bid fair to reach that dreary end." [3]

In this study, accordingly, special attention has been paid to aspects of the problem that have been altogether or partially neglected by previous inquiries. The question is considered from the standpoint of the boy, as well as from that of industry ; and a careful analysis has been attempted of the boy's personality and of the educational and social influences that condition his

[1] Majority Report of the Poor Laws Commission, Part VI. Chap. I. (13), § 136.

[2] Report of the Consultative Committee to the Board of Education, p. 16.

[3] R. A. Bray, "Boy Life and Labour," p. 129.

growth, as well as of the industrial conditions amid which he does his work.

Thus the problem we have to consider is not what happens at 19 to a fraction of boy workers, but what is occurring between 14 and 19 to the great majority of them.

The deterioration which has been too readily associated with the blind-alley occupation is, as a matter of fact, caused within a year or two of leaving school.[1] And it would still be created, even if all industrial "blind alleys" could be transformed into honest thoroughfares. The transition to manhood (coinciding with the termination of a blind-alley job) merely serves to reveal the deterioration. But this has been caused by social and industrial circumstances, which are independent of cul-de-sac employments. The impressionable period of adolescence, instead of being devoted to training as Nature intended, is sacrificed to the immediate profit of industry. The youth is subjected to industrial conditions which provide no education for mind or body or even hand. And outside his work, the boy comes into contact not with elevating agencies, which would train intelligence and character, but with social influences that have an unfortunate reaction upon both.

The early age at which deterioration sets in has for

[1] Dr. Sumpner, Principal of the Birmingham Municipal Technical Institute, has stated :—"What was important was that by the age of 15 or 16 those who had left the Elementary School at 13 or 14 and had had no subsequent schooling, had to a large extent lost the habit of learning and the discipline that came from a general education." (Consultative Committee Report, p. 561.)

One of the Inspectors of Education in Birmingham assured me that serious deterioration often occurred within a year of leaving school.

Mr. J. H. Whitehouse, M.P. ("Problems of Boy Life," p. 26), states :—"In the two years between 14 and 16 a boy forgets most of what he has learned at school."

Cf. also Poor Laws Commission, Appendix, Volume IX., Evidence 96250, 96251, 97350, 97424.

a long time been a matter of concern to the Education Committee of the Birmingham Town Council. It was at the request of the Committee, and largely through the instrumentality of Mr. Norman Chamberlain, that I undertook this investigation. My purpose was to find out why large numbers of boys became "failures" (using the word in a very broad sense) so early in life; and, if possible, how many boys were thus unfortunate. And in conducting the inquiry, the set purpose was to exclude not only the boy who got into the higher grades of labour, but also the youthful street-traders and "casuals," whose conditions of life readily explain their downfall. The investigation was, on the other hand, designed to include all such boys as belonged to the great mass of "unskilled" boy workers, variously estimated as half, two-thirds, or three-quarters of the whole.

The only practicable procedure seemed to be to take a manageable sample of such boys in their early manhood, and by detailed, individual inquiry, discover what causes had brought them to their relatively unsatisfactory condition.

The difficulty at once emerged as to the right way of getting a typical sample, and it would seem impossible to be sure that any particular aggregation of boys would be representative of "unskilled" boy workers in general. The courtesy of the officers of the Juvenile Labour Exchange enabled me to select from their files every boy in his 17th year [1] who had had four or more jobs since he left school.

[1] The inquiry included only boys who were in their 17th year on the day when the inquiry was begun (October 15th, 1912). Almost all of them would be between 16½ and 17½ during the time of the investigation. The inquiry began with 134 boys, but of these no fewer than sixty-three dropped out. Complete records were thus obtained of only seventy-one youths. The common practice of giving the wrong age at the Exchange, the error being discovered on consulting the school registers, accounted for most of these defections. Many boys were un-

It is the common practice in Birmingham for all but the "superior" boys to change their jobs frequently.[1] The "superior" boy (usually making for the highly-paid and better-class manual work) tends to remain in one job or change but rarely. By taking all boys with four or more jobs to their record, I therefore excluded this class. But I included, as will be seen,[2] a certain proportion of boys who were wastrels; boys with an abnormally nomadic industrial career; and therefore not typical of boys as a whole. Boys employed as street-traders and in casual ways were excluded by reason of the fact that such lads have no need of, and do not use, the Exchange.

The bulk of the boys selected are, I believe, typical of the mass of uneducative Boy Labour in Birmingham, which enlists the services of well above half and probably about three-quarters of all the juvenile population.[3] To what extent they are really representative will be more clearly shown by the chapters immediately subsequent to this; and the reader will be able to judge for himself from the data presented. In the later chapters I have been careful to attempt no generalisations, which depend for their validity on the precise composition of this sample.

traceable owing to the disappearance of the family from the only known address; in several cases the school teacher could give me no record of the boy at school.

[1] This Change of Jobs is apparently characteristic of every large centre of industry, and has been too little considered in works on Boy Labour. Its examination was made a special feature of this investigation (see pp. 199–205).

[2] Chapter IV.

[3] Chapters II., III. and IV. Cf. foregoing quotations, p. 3. It is almost impossible to state the exact proportion, because of the difficulty alluded to on p. 10 of defining "skilled" and "unskilled"; and also because no precise statistics exist. The point is fully considered in Chapter VIII. on Industrial Conditions. Mr. Tawney refers to these boys as "the large class of boys who are neither learners nor apprentices, and, who, though they are often overlooked, constitute at once by far the most serious part of the problem of Boy Labour" (Memorandum appended to the Report of the Consultative Committee, Vol. I. p. 308).

From the Labour Exchange I was able to get particulars of each boy's name, address, last school, and industrial career. Following upon this, I visited the Schools, and gathered all the information available relative to the school record of each of the boys from the head- and assistant-teachers. Next I went the round of the Homes, noted the statements of the parents concerning the boy and his ways, and collected particulars of the home, the parents and other members of the family. And, finally, I interviewed the Boy himself, usually in his own home. In very many cases I supplemented this interview by one or two further interviews; and also by inducing the boy to write me diaries of the way he spends his life, and of his industrial career, and so forth. As far as it was possible, I verified my own information by corroborative evidence from the voluminous records of the City of Birmingham Aid Society, the files of the Children's Care Committees, the testimony of other schools where the boy was educated,etc.

Having discovered in this way what were the main influences in the boys' lives, I made a first-hand study of each of these, including Boys' Clubs, Picture Palaces, Music Halls, Football Matches, Cheap Literature, and the conditions under which boys do their work. In estimating the force of these influences over the life of the working-boy, it is, of course, impossible to rule out the personal bias. I have been interested to note that among those familiar with this problem, to whom I have submitted my conclusions, some have urged exaggeration and others under-statement, in regard to identical points. I have always given in detail the evidence on which my view is based, and supported it, as far as possible, by reference to previous investigations and other authorities.

The three chapters immediately subsequent to this outline the lives of seventy-one boy-workers in this great

centre of industry. The individual boys are considered, and their industrial careers are given in some detail. Home and School, Industrial Conditions and Social Influences fall into their places as parts of each biography ; and then in the summing up we gain some insight into the strength of each in shaping the boy's future. These earlier chapters are almost confined to an examination of the direct and superficial aspects of the boys' careers. They deal with effects rather than with causes.

The later chapters deal with causes rather than effects. They attempt to analyse those features of the social and industrial structure which contribute to this manufacture of the Inefficient and the Unemployable.

Chapter V. deals with Childhood, and considers the influence of the early Home Upbringing and the School Training upon the boy.

Chapter VI. deals with the Boy himself, considered from a somewhat psychological point of view, during the period of adolescence. I have been slowly driven to believe that it is impossible to understand Boy Life and Labour except by this mode of treatment. So long as the question is looked upon merely from the side of industry, and as an appendage to the Unemployed Problem, we might perhaps visualise a sort of " economic boy," requiring nothing but a mechanical analysis of his activities. But such a mode of treatment, while ludicrously inadequate to explain the social aspects of this problem, to which I have devoted special attention, is also ill-adapted to its industrial consideration. The growing boy's reaction to social and industrial circumstances is totally different from what a man's would be ; and it is only by understanding something of adolescence that we can understand the boy's behaviour amid industrial conditions, or estimate the force of the social influences brought to bear upon him. It is hoped that Chapter VI. will itself indicate the soundness of this contention.

Chapter VII. deals with the Social Influences, which,

in varying degrees, form the environment in which the boys of Birmingham are growing up to manhood.

Chapter VIII. considers the Industrial Conditions amid which they move.

The last Chapter concerns itself with such Remedies for the evils connected with Unskilled Boy Labour as seem to suggest themselves in consequence of the conclusions reached in the preceding chapters.

Preliminary Note.

DEFINITIONS.

Misconceptions arise in investigations such as these because of the vagueness of the terminology employed. The terms "Skilled" and "Unskilled," "Inefficient" and "Unemployable," which are continually used in this study, seem especially to call for definition. Modern industrial conditions are such as to render the lines of demarcation between "skilled" and "unskilled" forms of work, and between "inefficiency" and "unemployableness," very difficult to draw. For the purposes of this investigation these terms will be used in the sense indicated by the following definitions: [1]—

"Skilled work or a 'trade' is any manual industrial operation or process, the performance of which requires that the workman shall have had a definite training extending over a term of years" (*e.g.* Compositor; Plumber; Gardener).

"Unskilled work is any manual industrial operation or process, the performance of which requires that the workman shall possess some degree of strength, dexterity, and knowledge, which may be obtained by practice, and

[1] The definitions of Skilled and Unskilled work are those given by Professor E. J. Urwick in his Evidence before the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws, Appendix, Vol. IX., 96921 Note.

without a definite training (apart from an elementary education)." [1]

Almost all forms of Boy Labour are of the unskilled variety—*e.g.*, the work of van-boys, errand-boys, boy-labourers, shop-boys; and the bulk of the labour also of those employed in factories in association with adult workers or with machines. It is quite impossible to give descriptions of the infinite variety of occupations that boys are engaged upon in factories; and in sketching the careers of the boys I have contented myself, as a rule, with using their own designation of their jobs. These convey as faithful a picture of these occupations as it is possible to portray in non-technical language. A clearer idea of the work boys do will perhaps be gained from the later chapter on Industrial Conditions.

The terms "high-skilled" and "low-skilled" are occasionally used, the former as equivalent to "skilled" and the latter as equivalent to "unskilled."

If the first-mentioned terms were not so firmly established, it would seem preferable to substitute always the terms "high" or "low-skilled," which indicate that all work requires some amount of skill, and that the difference is in all cases one of degree rather than of kind.[2]

Both Skilled or Unskilled work may be done efficiently or inefficiently according to the character and intelligence of the worker. "Inefficiency" is used in this study to denote the serious incompetence of the worker in the discharge of his industrial functions. Where this

[1] Cf. Professor A. Marshall, "The Principles of Economics," Vol. I. Book IV. Chap. IX. § 2 and § 4.

[2] Mr. N. B. Dearle has suggested to me that perhaps a useful three-fold classification of work might be made under the terms "skilled," "semi-skilled," and "unskilled"; the middle of these three terms being taken to include such work as that of a miner. It seems to me that while this extra term would be of value in a work on men's employment, it would serve rather to complicate than simplify the treatment of the problem of Boy Labour.

Inefficiency is intensified to the point of making his labour unprofitable or of questionable profit to an employer, so that he finds it almost impossible to obtain regular employment, it is called in this book "Unemployableness."

CHAPTER II.

BOYS OF CLASS I.:

APPARENTLY DESTINED FOR SKILLED WORK.

Classification of the Seventy-One Boys.

Class I.—Six of the boys under consideration in this study have emerged into positions where they are beginning to learn skilled work or its equivalent, after drifting about and doing unskilled work for three years. These boys have been placed in Class I. as boys who are destined for the ranks of the skilled workers.[1]

Class II.—Forty-four boys at the time of the investigation were still doing unskilled work, and it has been assumed that they will continue to do unskilled work in adult life. They have been

[1] The occupations of comedian, sailor and steward have been considered as equivalent to skilled work.

placed in Class II., as boys destined for the ranks of unskilled workers.

Class III.—A further twenty-one of the boys who were also doing unskilled work, appeared to be destined for unemployableness in later life. They were markedly so deficient in mental, moral or physical capacity—and sometimes in all three—as to make it exceedingly probable that at manhood, in competition with other adult workers, they would tend to be rejected for regular employment.

This classification is obviously arbitrary. We cannot be at all certain that each boy will turn out as it has been assumed that he will. But it will be seen on reading the following pages that the probabilities are strongly in the direction indicated. And, in any case, nothing turns upon the exact number of boys included in each class.

If we classify in the way suggested, we find that in Class I. there are no more than six boys out of the seventy-one. These six are all those who are learning a trade or its equivalent. They are acquiring a status in the industrial world, and giving themselves an economic value in the labour market over and above that of the boy who is Jack of all trades, but master of none. Unless the movements of industry throw them out of work or render their skill valueless, these boys will all fill honourable places in the industrial system. They will none of them, as far as can be seen, fall into the ranks of unskilled or poorly paid labour. They will earn wages sufficient to maintain a comfortable home. They will be efficient workers and capable citizens.

The cases included in Class I. have a special interest, because these boys, after drifting about in unskilled jobs, have somehow or other emerged into higher-grade work; and it will be instructive to study each in some detail.

Out of the six, only three have entered the ranks of productive industry, and these we will consider first.

1. The first boy, whom we will call A. L., comes from a distinctly superior home. His father earns good money as a stamper working on his own account, and A. L. is the only son. The mother looks after the home. The house boasts a drawing-room and a piano. In the back-yard A. L. has a little workshop, where he does fretwork. At school the boy did credit to his superior home surroundings. He took a good place in the Seventh Standard, had a "very satisfactory" record of conduct, and was then, as he is now, of first-rate physique. The father had the chance to have his son apprenticed on leaving school, but was persuaded by some of his acquaintances that it would be a mistake, and so the boy was left to shift for himself. His parents never bothered much about what he did, but seemed to trust him to go alone. He tells me that he had "no idea whatever" of what to do or where to go, when he left school; so in answer

to an advertisement in the *Mail* he began to learn die-sinking. After nine months of this, he came to the conclusion that it was not an occupation he cared for, and so he began to learn engraving. After a few months of that, he decided to go to the brass factory where his grandfather was foreman, and stayed there for twelve to fourteen months, leaving because he " didn't agree " with his aged relative. He went to another brass factory, but left it in a month, because, after being engaged and paid for day work, he was made a piece-worker, and could not earn his money. He was then at a " makeshift job " at a cycle-works for a time, during which his grandfather died; his objection to working at this brass-works being removed, he went back to this job and is getting on well.

This boy seems to have kept a shrewd eye on the future during his whole industrial career. For two years after he left school, he went to evening classes for drawing, machine-designing, and general subjects. He said, perhaps with wisdom born after the event, that he was glad he had been in different jobs, because it had enabled him to learn different processes (pattern-making first, then modelling and designing in brass). He had observed that " if you stayed in one shop you learned only one thing." He thinks " you must move about, and then link it all together " if you want to be an all-round workman. He hopes to be " Manager " later on ! He is a most capable, self-reliant individual; Secretary of his Sunday-School Class; a member of the Territorial Force; nicknamed " Hackenschmidt " among his mates for his physical strength. Such a boy is certain to make his way.

2. D. H. comes from a superior little home in one of the better-class areas outside the central parts of Birmingham. His father is a cabinet-maker. There are also two girls earning money. And there are three younger ones at school. There has never been any

severe poverty in the household, and the home stands vivid in my memory for its white tablecloth.

The boy did excellently in every way at school, and when I saw him he did not seem to have suffered any deterioration in physique or personality. As usual, he was left to shift for himself. His parents have always been interested in him, and realised the importance of his learning a trade; but apparently could not help him in any direct way in his career. He ran errands for six months in a factory; and then, in order to learn, went to a large motor works. Here he "got sick of asking the foreman" to move him from the warehouse to the works, where he could learn something; and in the end, after twelve months, threw up the job in disgust, and tried tube-drawing. This work he found too filthy, and gave it up in two months; but only to take an equally unpleasant job of the same nature. After one month of this, he got jobbing work with a plumber, has been with him for a year, and has learnt something of the trade. His only concern now is that he is not learning enough through mere jobbing work; but it would seem that he has secured a footing in this occupation, and that, with his first-rate natural endowment, he will be able to keep it.

3. H. V.'s case is in some respects similar.[1] His father is a hairdresser, but in this case, at any rate, the boy has not suffered any contamination through the undesirable moral atmosphere so often to be found in barbers' shops. He appears never to have worked in the shop himself. Being the youngest boy and the only child now at home, he and his two parents have been able to live comfortably on the takings of the shop. H. V. did well at school and took a high place in Standard VII. He was, said his Form-Teacher, "the last boy of whom unemployableness would be expected." His father and

[1] An account of this boy's career in his own words is given in Chapter VIII. p. 195.

he are great chums, and the father has always done what he could to help him in his career.

His first job was cleaning up in a shop, labouring, whitewashing, getting the men's teas, etc. He left it after a month because the work was uneducative and also, he asserts, because the employer wanted to "sink his wages." He then went into a jewellery works and was beginning to get started in this line of work when "the gaffer breaks," that is to say, the business failed, and he was cast adrift again. He next became assistant to an engineer in a factory for eight months, until the engineer got the sack because of some accident to the engine. H. V. went also, apparently through no fault of his own. He next tried "laying on" at a printer's for a third period of eight months. A chance recommendation from a gentleman, who took an interest in the boy, enabled him at this point to shift once again into a silversmith's shop. His wages dropped to a point lower than they were even in the first job he took on leaving school. But his father had the good sense to see how important it was for the boy to learn a trade, and, what was more vital, he could afford to forgo the difference in the boy's earnings.

H. V. is now, therefore, at the age of 17, "a sort of apprentice" (as his father calls it) to the trade of silversmith. He is strong, capable and refined, and there seems no reason to doubt that his future will be satisfactory.

4. J. H.'s career presents some strange vicissitudes. When the fortunes of the family were at their lowest ebb, owing to the father's illness and the superabundance of children, the mother was practically forced to steal in order to get clothing for her children. The Stipendiary said, "This stealing from shops was a serious matter, and he could not, as had been suggested, put the accused on probation. She would be fined 40*s.* or 21 days' imprisonment in the second division." [1] Recently, however,

[1] Newspaper cutting.

owing to the perhaps providential death of most of the children, and to the mending of the husband's health, the family have got into a comfortable position. The home, as I saw it, was of the superior type and boasted the luxury of a pianoforte.

The boy did moderately well at school and left in Standard VI. with a good character. For nine months he was learning the trade of silversmith, but then lost his job because of shortage of work. He then became a page in a railway dining saloon, but lost the job after three months through getting late. Next he went to a picture-house and for fourteen months obtained the princely income of about £1 a week. This was made up of tips amounting to some 15*s.* and wages amounting to 5*s.* The Management, however, decided to lower the wage to 2*s.* 6*d.*, and the boy threw up his job. He next went to the railway job again for seven months, and lost it again through getting late. Then he went into a job for a week at a factory and another for a few months in a rolling-mill. But his father's employment as a commercial traveller brings him into touch with influential people, and he has now secured a position for his son as assistant-steward on a boat. The boy is strong and capable and has the qualities which will fit him to succeed in the line of work he is taking up.

5. P. H., the fifth youth in this class, has become a sailor. His father earns a good though variable income as a slater. There are five children, two still at school, and one girl a cripple. The mother has for three years been "living with another man," and the house-keeping has devolved upon the children. The school teacher, who took a great interest in this family, used to be greatly amused to hear the boys discussing how to expend the week's allowance. The home, in spite of the sufficiency of the father's income, was filthy and untidy beyond description. The winkle-shells that covered the table looked as if they had lain there for weeks, and suggested

that no systematic clearing up of meals ever took place. The home was quite evidently in want of a woman's hand to put it to rights.

P. H. was almost at the top of his school. "Thoroughly reliable, dare-devil, but full of excellent parts," is his teacher's verdict upon him.

He was errand-boy, messenger-boy at a post office, and then working on the capstan-lathe, before he joined the Royal Navy.

His own views about his career are interesting :—

"When I first left school I thought I should like to join the Army or Navy, and as I was not big enough I got any kind of situation just to keep me from idleness and pass the time away till I was big enough. . . . My father told me to stick to one job and learn the trade and not keep getting fresh jobs. He wasn't in very great need of my money, but when it was very bad weather it came in handy (as my father is an outdoor worker)."

In response to the question, "Do you feel your drifting from job to job was a good thing?" he replies :—

"I don't think it a good thing if I had meant to learn a trade, but I didn't. If I had been a cripple and couldn't have joined the Navy, I should have kept my first job as they liked me."

That this boy is in his right place may be judged from his enthusiastic descriptions of his life on board H.M.S. *Impregnable*. He says, "My greatest pleasure is when I am boxing in the Gym. or playing football," and he means to have a sweetheart as soon as he has been made a Petty Officer!

6. G. E. is the last of the members of this Class. His case has features in common with that of P. H. His father is a travelling actor, and has boarded the boy with the parents of his two school-chums. There he lives in comfort and gaiety, and as the head of the house naïvely informed me, "he's up to all manner o' damn tricks." The mother travels about with the father.

The boy has had about fifteen jobs, but his industrial career is irrelevant, because all his aspirations are centred on becoming an actor like his father. He has what he calls a "squiffer" (or concertina), and is hard at work practising songs and "learning the patter." When he is good enough, his father has promised to get him a place on the stage. Till that time, his parent has thought it best that he should "knock about," as he himself did, and learn the ways of the world. The boy was most interesting in conversation, and with mutual pleasure we exchanged views on English poetry. He found working-class boys "dreary," and comparing their slow-moving minds with his own, this was perhaps not surprising. He has ambition, and the capacity to realise it, and will probably get on well enough as a second-rate comedian.

Conclusions concerning the Six Boys of Class I.

Not one of these six boys of Class I. has ever suffered from insufficiency of the material necessaries of life. Every one of them has come from a comfortable home, and four of them from houses that boast luxuries like a pianoforte or a drawing-room. The home of P. H. was dirty and poor-looking, but this was due to neglect, not lack of income.

As far as I can discover—and this is almost a corollary of what has been said of their homes—not one of these boys was engaged in any employment out of school hours. The father was in every case a skilled worker: the respective occupations being Stamper, Cabinet-maker, Actor, Hair-Dresser, Commercial Traveller, and Slater.

In four cases the mother was in the home; in one she was away travelling with the boy's father (the actor), but her place was taken by an excellent substitute; in one case the mother had left the home.

These cases were also exceptional among those investigated because of the interest taken by the parents, and especially the fathers, in the work and future of their sons. This did not always amount to real direction, but it did mean talking with the lad about his future, and that would have the effect of opening the boy's eyes to the path he was taking.

Intimately associated with the good parentage of these boys, we have to notice that in almost every case there is physical, mental and moral superiority. Not one suffered from any physical defect that was noticeable either to the teacher at school or to me three years later. The school reports on the health were :—" Very good," " healthy—strong," " strong—lively," and so on in every case ; and my own impression, reached independently, and before seeing the teacher's verdict, was in every case a confirmation.

In intelligence there is almost the same superiority. Four of them took high places in Standard VII. ; the other two were high in Standard VI. ; and it should be noted that the two who did not reach the highest form at school are those who were to become steward and actor ; and that the capacity for these occupations is quite likely to be such as would not reveal itself in success in the school system.

In character, J. H. (the under-steward) is described as " average—satisfactory." Concerning G. E.'s character, I could get no school report ; and—inferring from what his guardian says of his high spirits—it might not be laudatory. P. H., the sailor, was at school a boy whom his master loved for his radiant, fine qualities. Of the three who went into trades, A. L. was " very satisfactory" ; H. V. was " the last boy of whom unemployableness would be expected" ; and D. H. was " excellent." It seemed to me that in every case, except perhaps that of the one boy getting into a service occupation, there is a strength of character distinctly above the average.

This is a point of great importance. It suggests that the personality of the boy is in these cases the determining factor that has brought success. A boy with a strong personality (accompanied by physical fitness) will make his way in the world, come what may in his path.

As far as one can judge, there has not been deterioration, physical, intellectual or moral, in the case of any of these boys since they left school.

But seeing that the period of adolescence should be one of growth, we have to ask ourselves if there has been natural development during these three all-important years? As far as their bodies go, Yes. As regards character, it is difficult to speak dogmatically. They may have gained in grit and courage through their experiences, otherwise they would perhaps have gained more if they had been kept more continuously in touch with elevating influences. A. L. has attended a place of worship, a club and evening classes; none of the others have been in touch with any of these agencies. But four of them read good literature and all have good homes, so perhaps their characters have been developing in a hopeful environment. They have probably all gained a sharpness through their battle with industrial conditions; and by their reading, etc., most of them have to some extent expanded their minds. But it seems certain that they might have been much more capable at seventeen if they had been afforded more appropriate scope for development.

They have all emerged into what appears a satisfactory position. The nomadic career of three of them (A.L., D.H., H. V.) can be explained by the desire and determination, that slowly ripened into consciousness, to get a job for which they were fitted. The under-steward seems to have reached his haven partly by desire, partly by having special qualifications for that class of work, and partly by being lucky. G. E., the actor, merely changed

his jobs because it was a family tradition. (His father did the same.) He has just been killing time until he enters upon the work he loves. P. H., the sailor, has apparently done much the same. From school till about the present time, no one of these boys received any sort of training appropriate to the career he is now taking up. And while these boys have apparently won a position to which their superior personalities entitle them, we shall find others of characteristics almost, if not quite, as good, who have found circumstances too much for them. It would seem that in some of these cases (*e.g.* H. V., who has just begun to learn at a silversmith's), it needed only a little more pressure from circumstances to have depressed the boy into the inferior grades of labour. Theoretically, of course, it would have been an advantage to each of these boys to have entered straightway upon the career he has now embraced. But this was impossible for the reason that has impressed me continually in studying this problem, and that is, that very few boys at 14 have any definite conception of what they would like to be. G. E. wanted to be an actor and P. H. a sailor. Not one of the others apparently had any but vague ideas. They plunged headlong into industrial life, and only gradually discovered that they were drifting and decided what point they desired to reach. These boys were fortunate enough to realise their position in time to save themselves from calamity.

To what extent are these boys representative of other boy-workers in Birmingham? It will be remembered that the criterion of Change of Jobs was accepted, in order to select boys who were not of the Class of skilled workers at all. And it seems probable that these boys, in their drifting and final emergence into skilled work or its equivalent, are not typical of any considerable number.

Every one of the boys of Class I. was a boy of superior

natural endowment. Such boys, as a rule, would get into a situation where they would begin soon after leaving school to learn a trade. This seems to be the case with the great majority of "superior" boys. Their fathers or their school teachers (and nowadays the Exchange Officials and the Care Committee Helpers) are careful to see that such boys do not waste these golden years of youth. Employers, too, are always anxious to get hold of promising lads. Nevertheless it must sometimes happen, either because of the uncontrollable accidents of industrial life or for some other reason, that some of these first-rate boys drift about, and at 17 have learnt nothing to fit them for first-rate work. Some of these, in spite of their nomadic career, manage at a late period of life to start learning a trade. We have seen this happen in the case of a few boys. But usually, a first-rate boy, in the opinion of those well acquainted with industrial conditions in Birmingham, secures a footing soon after leaving school. If he does not do this within three years of leaving, it becomes exceedingly difficult for him to find a place in skilled work.

What usually happens, if such a boy drifts about for three years, is that he finally accepts the lot of an unskilled worker.

Even of the boys placed in Class I., as emerging finally into "skilled work," only three got into skilled *industry*. The other three became sailor, under-steward, and actor; and for these occupations the change of jobs was of less consequence. If a boy has drifted about and learnt nothing for three years—even supposing that he can find an employer to take him and that his parents will make the monetary sacrifice—we should expect him to accept wages lower than he ever earned previously and start learning a trade, only if he were a boy of exceptional quality.

Generally speaking, if a boy has drifted for three

years, either through his own fault or through misfortune, he is not at 17 likely to make sufficient effort to get into educative work. He becomes an unskilled worker, as in the case of the thirteen boys considered in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III.

BOYS OF CLASS II: APPARENTLY DESTINED FOR UNSKILLED WORK.

We have next to consider a class of forty-four boys, who seem to be almost certainly destined for the ranks of unskilled labour. It is, of course, not possible to be sure of the future of any boy; but I have been at great pains to try to make the classification as accurate as possible, and the reader will have the facts laid before him upon which the judgment is based.

It may be that one or two of these lads will succeed in recovering very late in their career from the effects of a bad start, and win for themselves the position to which their natural endowment entitles them. What seems much more probable is, that some of those here accepted as destined for steady unskilled labour will deteriorate into the casual or unemployable type of adult, whom we have to consider when we come to Class III. But as far as one can predict—judging mainly by their industrial status and by their physique, character and intelligence at the present time—they are boys who, while they will not have strength to climb into Class I., will yet not allow themselves to fall into Class III. If they do so fall, it will be because of an undue pressure of circumstances—*e.g.* a long period of unmerited unemployment, which their characters would not be sufficiently steeled to resist.

These boys of Class II. will probably, therefore, become ordinary unskilled workers; they will use their

hands and not their heads; they will in most cases do work which you or I could learn in a few months or even in a few days; they will in most cases take low-skilled jobs in factories, in association with machines or as assistants to skilled workers. Their earnings will in almost all cases be well under 30s. a week and insufficient to maintain themselves and their wives and children in comfort, even if in decency! They will inhabit the overcrowded areas that fill the central parts of Birmingham, and perpetuate their own inefficiency in the weak bodies and slow brains of their children.

The youths of this class may be conveniently separated into two distinct groups :—

Group A.—Those who, it would seem, should legitimately have taken a place in Class I., and entered the higher grades of skilled labour.

Group B.—Those whose unskilled future was suggested by their school records. Some of these might have become skilled workers under more favourable conditions, but none of them at school showed the superiority of the boys of Class I., or of the boys of Group A in this class. We have made the assumption that these boys have "got what they were fit for."

In Group A there are thirteen boys; in Group B, thirty-one.

Class II.—Group A.

BOYS APPARENTLY DESTINED FOR UNSKILLED WORK WHO WERE FITTED FOR SKILLED WORK.

Every one of these careers presents its own unique features, and it is hazardous to attempt anything like a rigid classification. For convenience, however, we may consider first the five boys who are the most likely, and indeed the only ones likely out of all those in Class II., to

get into the higher grades of labour. They have not done this at the present time. It seems to me, further, more than doubtful if they will be able to recover so late in life. But there is certainly a possibility of it.

1. The first of this smaller group of five is B. W., a youth of the Jewish race, whose father (dead nine years) used to make a livelihood by teaching Hebrew in the synagogue. His mother now keeps one of those nondescript provision shops where you can buy anything, and the family have never suffered much poverty. When I spoke to B. W.'s old headmaster concerning the prospects of this boy, he said to me, "Don't you have any fear about that lad. He'll end up all right." And when I told him what he was doing, he said, "You see, he'll either be a champion billiard-player or a hotel-proprietor!" This confidence in this particular boy, based on a legitimate faith in the Jewish character in general, is well justified. But the circumstances of B. W.'s career have made his prospects much more dubious. He may be the hotel-proprietor, but he will certainly not be the champion billiard-player. At school he reached the top of Standard VI., and did excellently at sports. "Honest, clean, truthful; a bright, merry-looking, intelligent lad. Always regular and attentive." On leaving school he went into the jewellery line, and was put to work at diamond-setting. The incessant sparkle of the stones injured his sight in such a way that the doctors he has seen can give him no hope of recovery. He, therefore, left this place and went in for brooch- and charm-making elsewhere. After a few months his former employer asked him to come back, and he continued to work at brooches and charms, being with this firm for eighteen months in all. In the end he was discharged because of shortage of work. But for several months he had found this fine work very painful for his damaged eyes; and instead of going on in the skilled work he had been doing, he dramatically declined into a billiard-marker at a

Picture Palace. Here, with wages of 6*s*. and tips of double that amount, he was making a good income when I first saw him; and it was at this time that his old teacher prophesied about his future. He, himself, realised clearly the inferiority of this occupation, and got a job from the Labour Exchange, serving in a public-house. In this place he is, at the time of writing, serving drink and dinners for a wage of 12*s*., plus tips. He tells me he means soon to go travelling for his brother, who is going to start "business in curtains." What his future will be is at the present time uncertain, but his very weak eyesight will be in many directions an insuperable obstacle.

2. C. H. comes from one of the cleanest and pleasantest homes I visited. His father is the caretaker and boiler-minder of a large factory. His mother died three years ago of cancer, but her place is well filled by a kind and sensible stepmother. The boy did excellently at school and was well qualified in every respect to become a skilled worker. His father says he would have had him apprenticed if he had had sufficient income to pay the premium. The boy chose to go to a ring manufacturer in order to learn the jewellery trade; but became dissatisfied with a wage of 5*s*. and nothing but errands for his occupation. So he went to a plater's for 6*s*. 6*d*. He was again kept to errands for two months, and so left that job. Next he tried a cycle-works for three weeks, and left because of the long hours (6 a.m. to 6 p.m.). He then got into the employ of a firm making letter-presses, and in January of this year (1913) had been there eight or nine months and was getting on well. Early in January, however, he wrote to me to say :—" I am hereby writing you, asking you whether you know a good situation I could get into as I have been suspended from work till further orders." What his future will be is doubtful. He was still out of work a month later. He is a boy who has moved judiciously from one job to another, trying to better himself

in all respects. He writes a clean, neat, sensible letter, is a most taking fellow, and in physique, a young giant. With such natural gifts, perhaps he will force his way into skilled work.

3. M. R.'s school record is less satisfactory than that of the two foregoing boys. He was " a good boy in school but his attendance was irregular," and he only reached Standard VI. It appears, however, that this was due to the fact that his father was devoting a good deal of his spare time to training the boy for the stage, and that his education was going on at home as well as at school. The father was gymnast, trickster, singer, etc., on the music halls, and the boy's ambition was to follow the same profession. Unhappily for him his father died just as he was leaving school. M. R. was therefore left to find some other employment in order to keep the home together. His mother got work, dressmaking and office-cleaning. He went to a silversmith's, but for eighteen months learned nothing much more than soldering. Then he was at a sawmills for a short time and left it after an accident. He next went to a cabinet-maker's, but was turned out through slackness of work. After two short jobs at a brass foundry and an electrician's he was getting on well at a football-maker's, but lost this work after twelve months because the firm broke up. (Three at least of these jobs might have been the avenue to a skilled trade.) He has now secured a place in a brass founder's on the emery wheel. It is unhealthy because of the emery dust, and he says, " If I go on, I shall get ' grinder's rot ' " (a disease that works considerable ravage among brassworkers). What is certainly true is, that there is no prospect here for him of a wage much above £1. He realises it plainly, but says he must keep on for the present, because his wages now are very high for a boy (17*s.*) and his mother badly needs them. He is a first-rate young fellow; good at photography and fretwork; fond of Dickens, Robert Louis Stevenson and

Bulwer Lytton, and well up in Shakespeare; delightful with the banjo; not over-strong, but quite strong enough for normal work. His ambition is to be a blacksmith, but this is impossible for the present, owing to the circumstances of his home.[1]

4. B. G., the fourth of this group, who may emerge into better-class work, has rather a poorer school record than the previous three. He reached only Standard V., but this appears to have been more due to "truanting and laziness" than to lack of ability. He had first-rate physical strength. His father died seven years ago of pneumonia, but there has never been any distressing poverty in the home. The mother now makes a comfortable income by keeping lodgers. After trying four jobs (the first for twelve months) as van-boy, van-boy, errand-boy, and worker in a brass factory, this boy got into his real line of work as a page-boy at a large hotel. This work may not be the best sort of occupation for a lad, but it needs special talents such as the hotel-manager told me were exceedingly difficult to find in boys. He paid this youth 8*s*. a week and gave him his food. B. G. probably received something like 25*s*. extra in tips. This fabulous income was too much for him. After keeping his place for eight or nine months, he became more and more unpunctual and irregular in his work. The manager discovered that this was due to sitting up late at night, playing cards and drinking. After warning him more than once, he discharged him. At the time of writing the boy is out of employment. He may get back again into the line of work for which he seems specially fitted; but his age is rather against him, and it is quite likely that he will drift back into ordinary unskilled work.

5. M. F., the last boy of this sub-group, has twice been in plumbing jobs, which might have led to a skilled

[1] An account of M. R.'s industrial career in his own words is given on p. 196.

career. Apparently it is the mother's objection to the greasiness of the work, and his own love of spare time for reading, that have kept him at the useless errand-boy work which he is now doing. While he only reached Standard V. at school, this was apparently because he preferred his own methods of study to those of the Board of Education. He was one of the best-informed boys I have met, and read omnivorously—even to the neglect of his tea, as his mother told me. He comes from a large, superior home, maintained by the combined earnings of the father, now a porter and formerly a soldier, and of the son-in-law, who lives there with the eldest daughter. The case is one of a complete industrial misfit, of which there must be many in every large city. He knows he is doing inferior work, but appears to lack initiative and opportunity to get into more suitable employment.

His own description of his industrial career may be of interest.

First job.—Errand-boy for twenty-one months (wages, 4*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.* 6*d.*) :—

"When I left school I went to the engravers, by name N. & P., and I work there twenty-one month, and why I left was because I went for a job at C. S. Ltd. and went on Tuesday. Mr. P. asked me where I was. So on the Saturday when I got my money I found I was a shilling short, so my mother told me not to go back there again."

Second job.—Plumber's boy for four months :—

"I was out of work for a fortnight but I got a job at G. H. & Sons, they were Plumbers and Gas-fitters. I was there about four months and then I got the sack on account of shortness of work."

Third job.—Plumber's boy for one and a half months :—

"I then was out of work for a fortnight, and then an old plumber came and ask me to go and work for him at T.'s, and why I left there was because he would not pay my Insurance money. I work there about six weeks."

Fourth job.—Errand-boy for R. Ltd. :—

"I was out of work for a fortnight and then I got a job at R. Ltd., my present job." He has been here for eight months, "Canvassing with Travellers and doing errands. It is call a Porter's job." He also says, "I do a lot of packing up of parcels and sweeping up of the upper floors and dusting, etc."

In the remaining cases in this group of boys who *ought* to have got into skilled work, there appears still less likelihood of the boys emerging from low-skilled labour. And yet it seems that with the help of a good friend or the interest of a good employer, every one of these boys might have entered into the higher grades of industry. They seem to have been fitted for skilled work, but to have failed to get to it, because they had no encouragement, or training.

By this time, unfortunately, they have in most cases lost ambition to be anything better than what they are.

6. A. B. has had four jobs, all in brass foundries. He appears to have changed always in order to get more money. His father is also in brass work, earning 25*s*. a week. A. B. has, however, two brothers at home, older than himself, both earning, so the family income is considerable. He reached the top standard at school ; was "strong and sturdy" in his teacher's judgment ; but his character was "not quite satisfactory." He seemed to me to be a superior boy in every way. He is now earning 16*s*., and realises plainly that he will never earn more than about 25*s*. in his present employment.

7. B. T. had an excellent character from his school, reached Standard VII., and had no physical defects. His home is poor but clean, and not poverty-stricken. The father blames the boy for not sticking to his jobs, and says "this here independence of boys is the ruination of England." He has been at the following kinds of work : Filing, van, van, filing, dogging up, filing, tap-making, filing. He has had a few months at each and his wages have been 6*s*., 7*s*., 7*s*., 6*s*., 9*s*., 10*s*., 10*s*., 14*s*. He gave

me his reasons for leaving each job, except the second, and I repeat them for what they are worth :—

First job.—" To get more money." *Second job.*— ? . *Third job.*—" Didn't want van work in the winter." *Fourth job.*—" Master always growling." *Fifth job.*—" Too greasy." *Sixth job.*—" Sack for taking half a day off." *Seventh job.*—" Short time." He was at his eighth job (filing) when I ran across him. He appears to have deteriorated since he left school and is now rather a poor sort of being, both in character and intelligence.

8. B. J. is another boy who " lacks control," as his teacher put it, or is " self-willed," as his mother phrased it. The record of the home is tragic. The father, who is a polisher, has been " living with another woman " for over two years and sends nothing home. The mother was left with seven children, of whom even now only two are earning. She has tried to keep the house together by charing. She said to me : " There ain't no God or 'E wouldn't let me suffer as I've suffered,"—theology which seemed unanswerable on the doorstep. A supplementary report from the Charity Organisation Society, which helped the case in 1907, gives this woman the best of characters. At that time the man was out of work through chronic pleurisy.

It would seem as if the desire to help the home by earning as much as possible had to some extent actuated B. J. He himself alleges as the reason for leaving his jobs his wish to earn more. He has been at errands, plumbing, errands, " rubbing up wire," a fruit-shop, tube-drawing and cycle-wheel lacing ; getting 5*s*., 6*s*., 7*s*., 8*s*. to 10*s*., 9*s*. and 9*s*. His school teacher gives him a good character, but says he was inclined to " kick over the traces." He thinks that a father's control would have kept him steady. He is a strong lad ; reached Standard VII. at school and still often reads at the Library ; he says he is " learning " cycle-wheel lacing,

but apparently there is very little to learn in this specialised branch of cycle manufacture.

9. C. T. was not particularly brilliant at school, but he had no defects in mind, body or character, and was in Standard VII. With a little more good fortune he would have been in skilled work. The father, however, is doing only casual work and lives alone with the son. C. T. started with errands, as so many do, and said to me apologetically, "I didn't think of anything when I'd just left school." Then for eighteen months he was going about on the wagons and motor lorry of a large firm. He left because he received no rise in wages and because the firm gave up its motor lorry, to which he had become attached! Then he thought he would try a biscuit factory, but found the heat of the ovens too much for him and left it in three weeks. And now he has descended to one of the meanest occupations a boy can have, bottle-washing for a brewery firm. He gets 10s. for this, besides tips when he goes round on Saturday with the wagons. He is keenly aware of the unsatisfactory nature of his present work, and is very anxious to be a motor-driver. On the motor lorry in his second job he almost learnt to drive, but he cannot get a licence till he is eighteen. It may be that later on he will be able to get into this superior employment, but every month that passes will make his prospects less hopeful.

10. C. B. comes from a comfortable, superior home, and his father has been an engine-driver for thirty-one years. He was a truant at school, but otherwise satisfactory as a pupil in all respects. He left near the top, and at 17 he seemed to have maintained the promise of his schooldays—in everything except getting into skilled employment. The fact that he was a truant at school may to some extent explain the migratory nature of his industrial career; but he seems also to have been unfortunate. He lost his first job as errand-boy because

the firm broke up; gave up his second job of filing because he found it too far off; lost a third place at a printer's because of shortage of work; left "turning" because he did not like it; and left "milling" because the employer put him to piecework instead of the day-work (which he understood was in the bond); he gave up a tinning job because it hurt his fingers and wore out his clothes; and is now at a brass factory earning 12*s*. a week.

He appears to have lost the ambition, if he ever had it, to be anything better than an unskilled worker.

11. G. G. was first-rate in both mental and physical attainments at school, but his teacher reports him as being both lazy and untruthful. The father, a brass-dresser by trade, has done little or nothing for two years owing to the loss of one eye. Three daughters, however, are earning besides G. G., and the home has never suffered acute poverty. G. G. has written me a long and interesting narrative of his varied industrial career, parts of which I append :—

First job.—At a large Draper's; five months.

"I had used to go at 7.30 a.m. and sweep different Departments such Mantel department, Hat and Millinery, etc. After that I used to put paper cardboard etc. in bags in a sellar which made my head ache and then I should go out with van and deliver parcels all over Selly Oak, Selly Park, King's Heath and Small Heath till I was finished, which would be between 7 p.m. or 8 p.m. I did not want any skill. I left because I was always getting wet and catching cold which I did for 7*s*. a week and they did not expect to give any Van Boys any more than that so I left."

Second job.—At a Brewery; three months.

"Firstly I would go to the stable which was not far at 7 o'clock and clean the horses' harness and then go to Brewery and get wagon laden with cases of bottled beer and deliver it on our round and then we were finished about 6 o'clock. Wages 7*s*., left because would not give a rise; there about three months."

Third job.—At an Engineering Works ; three months.

" I was in the Warehouse and running errands for 6*s.* 6*d.*, had a rise in six weeks, it was a dirty job, so I asked them to give me another so they would not. I was there about 3 months and I did 10 hours a day. The persons I worked with were very good for I used to make their tea and fetch their dinner which I was treated for on Saturday. I left and I was fetched back again and they said they would give me another job. I started on this other job piecework and they told me I would earn about 10*s.* and at the end of my hard week's work I earned 7*s.* 10*d.* so I left. If I had stopped there twelve months I should not have got any more. I did plenty of overtime."

Fourth job.—At a Tube Drawer's ; three months.

" I was taking metal out of a cutting machine which used to cut my hands.

" I was there from 8 a.m. till 7 p.m. and worked for 8*s.* 6*d.* a week, at this they would not give me any more and I left. I was there three months. I worked with my brother. Also this was a dirty job.

" This could be learnt in five minutes.

" During my intervals of a day or two I used to sell newspapers and make my week's money up by this. My opportunity of leaving was to get more money and a better job."

Fifth job.—At a Bookbinder's ; three months. Left because not liked.

Sixth job.—At a Steel Toy Works ; seven months. Left because of slack work.

Seventh job.—At a Metal Foundry ; one week. Left through slack work.

Eighth job.—At an Electrical Works ; three months. Left because dissatisfied with wage.

Ninth job.—At a Metal Foundry ; one week. Left for more money.

Tenth job.—At Rubber Agent's ; one and a half months.

" My work with Mr. A. was taking tyres to different Rubber Firms in Birmingham and letters. I got on alright with Mr. A. and he gave me 11*s.* a week and I did short hours sometimes 9 a.m. till 6 p.m. or 9 a.m. till 5 p.m. I was with him six weeks

before I was sent away with fever. While I was away he sent my Insurance Card filled up and said he would do anything for me. He is willing to take me back as soon as I am fit for work."

12. The home of H. H. is broken up. His father had for some years before the birth of this boy been getting such broken employment and beggarly income that he left home when he knew this fresh burden was coming into his life and died soon after. The mother now lives with a married daughter and helps to support the household by charing and baby-minding. The boy has been looked after from infancy by kind-hearted neighbours, who suggested that their not having the authority of the boy's father was largely the cause of H. H.'s instability. However that may be, H. H. has had a changeful career. There are signs that he wanted to learn, and his jobs have mostly been in the same line of work. He went to evening classes for a short period, but abandoned them as too burdensome. He left his first job of errands because he didn't like it; was discharged from a second job of errands because a big waiter was scratched, but he declares it was not his doing; he left a third job of errands because he could not learn anything (so he says); he next tried to learn chasing, and left through shortage of work; then spoon-polishing, and brass-polishing, and again spoon-polishing, leaving in each case for what he thought would be a better job. He is now polishing at a silversmith's, and when I asked him why or how he got this last job, he replied, " I hadn't got any other. You take the first one that comes round to you." That seems to express with fair accuracy the purposeless nature of the boy's career and of the careers of great numbers of boys like him. He appears to have deteriorated since he left school, is pale and weak looking and seems feeble in character and intellect. This boy will probably never be fit for good work again.

13. C. W. is another lad who ought to have been a skilled worker. His father is a drysalter, and the home is

superior and comfortable. He was a first-rate boy in every way at school, and to-day he is a finely built and handsome young fellow of good character and sound sense. He began in the engineering line, as engineer's assistant, but left the work because it was too far away. He left a second job in a blacksmith's shop for the same reason. Then he tried a bakehouse, but left the 9*s.* he earned there for the alluring 16*s.* of "capstan-work." There he now is; engaged in the most mechanical of occupations; and doomed to be a man without a trade in his fingers.

Each of these thirteen boys gave reasonable promise at school of being capable of entering the ranks of skilled and better-paid labour. Some of them may yet redeem the promise of their boyhood. But all appear to be destined for work which might well have been left to less capable heads and hands. In every one of these cases, therefore, there is a definite degradation of the school standard; and in six cases there appears to be a deterioration already well marked in the boy himself.

It is difficult nicely to apportion the blame for this waste of human material. The boy is at fault in the sense that he did not exhibit qualities above the average in coping with circumstances, but beyond that we can scarcely condemn any of these thirteen. It would seem that in every case—certainly in all those considered in this investigation—the boy is subject to a pressure of circumstances against which it is beyond the average boy's strength to make headway.

Seven of these youths came from quite comfortable homes and only one (B. T.) from a home that was seriously poverty-stricken. Each household, moreover, showed the characteristics of a good home; but perhaps the loss of a parent in no fewer than seven of the cases contributed to the inconsecutiveness of the boy's career. And whereas every one of the fathers of the boys of Class I. was a

skilled worker, only three of the fathers of these thirteen were in that position. There is almost a caste-system in the various grades of labour; and the fact that the father is unskilled seems to act like a bias carrying the son also towards unskilled labour. Heredity, the father's narrower circle of ideas and his lack of influence in the industrial world, seem to predetermine the career of his children.[1] Perhaps, therefore, in the Home we may find some clue to the career, which should have been educative, had it followed the line of the school record.

The Social Influences in the lives of these lads were not, on the whole, such as would stimulate their ambition to become first-rate workers. Two read at the Library; a third knew Shakespeare well; one tells me, in a weekly budget of expenditure, "Spent on Books, etc., 1*s.* 6*d.*" The rest seem to be content with "reading only football," "Sexton Blake," etc. One boy once went to Evening Classes, but gave it up—says his father—because he was "too full o' play." None of the others have ever been to classes. Only one goes to a Club. Only two go to Church, and one of these two to a Sunday School. Almost all of them, in varying degrees, patronise Picture Palace, Music Hall and Football Match. Such influences are the normal ones in the lives of working-boys. In most cases the conditions of work, combined with the absence of elevating influence, merely serve to render inefficient a lad who would in any case have been an unskilled worker. But in these thirteen cases circumstances seem to have depressed boys well fitted for first-rate manual work, and made of them unskilled workers. The boy may be partly to blame. What is certainly wrong is the system which leaves him during these impressionable years without guidance or supervision.

[1] Cf. Professor A. Marshall, "Principles of Economics." Professor Marshall refers to Mill's observation on the same point. Mr. Egbert Jackson, who was working at other aspects of this problem concurrently with me in Birmingham, has accumulated much interesting evidence upon this same phenomenon.

And these thirteen boys must be typical of a considerable number of boys leaving school every year, and failing, because of lack of direction at the start and because of want of supervision afterwards, to make the most of themselves. The number of such "relative failures" is perhaps only a small fraction of the whole, but it is large enough to justify the work of all those agencies, official and voluntary, which are striving to get "the right boy into the right place."

Class II.—Group B.

THIRTY-ONE BOYS APPARENTLY DESTINED FOR UNSKILLED EMPLOYMENT.

The other thirty-one of those placed in Class II., as being destined for unskilled employment, appear to have raised hopes of nothing better at school. Speaking colloquially, they have "got what they were fit for." Their careers all reproduce somewhat the same features, and it would seem that no purpose would be served by considering them in any detail. They are given, therefore, in the briefest outline.[1]

1. A. H.—*Home*—Very poor; rent, 4*s.*; father, dead; mother, at work (hooks and eyes). *School*—Standard V.; physique, good; character, "slow." *Jobs*—Filing, errands, engraving, tinplating, polishing. He seems now to be rather feeble in intellect and character and physique.

2. B. E.—*Home*—Comfortable; rent, 10*s.* or more (including public-house); father, a brass-worker for

[1] The particulars of the individual biographies of these lads are not of great importance. They might almost be called "normal" careers. In their case, the common characteristics of Upbringing, Training and Environment assume the chief importance, and these are dealt with in some detail in the summing up of these thirty-one careers (p. 49), and, of course, in still fuller detail in the general treatment of the later chapters.

forty years, and now a publican; mother, dead. *School*—Low in Standard VII.; "very willing and earnest"; weak physique. *Jobs*—Stamping, "messing about in a shop," errands, mud-guard cutting. He seems now to be still weaker in body and to lack strength of character. His intelligence is above the average of the boys in this group.

3. B. J.—*Home*—Rather poor and dirty; rent, 5*s.*; father, "head blowing" in a glass-works; mother, charing. *School*—Standard V.; "a poor duffer of a boy"; big and strong. *Jobs*—Filing, dogging up, dogging up, filing. He seems now to be just about what his teacher said he was at school.

4. C. H.—*Home*—Just above "the poverty line"; rent, 7s. (thirteen in family); father, a caster, and now suffering from "caster's rot"; mother, at home. *School*—Standard IV.; "a good, trustworthy boy"; "sturdy, well built." *Jobs*—Errands, pedal-fitting, warehouse, filing, capstan, warehouse, and errands at a butter-shop. He is now a rather dull, feeble lad, who appears to be quite satisfied with his present position.

5. C. A.—*Home*—Poor but well-kept; rent, 4*s.* 6*d.*; father, a labourer; mother, at home. *School*—Standard IV.; colourless kind of boy; healthy. *Jobs*—Tapping, core-making, drilling, drilling, drilling, milling, milling. He appears now to be a strong, slow boy who is well suited for unskilled labour.

6. C. J.—*Home*—Superior; rent, 6*s.* 6*d.*; father used to make a large income painting pictures on wooden trays, etc., but is now incapacitated; mother, at home. *School*—Standard V.; "stubborn, out of control"; "robust." *Jobs*—Brush-work, tinning, polishing, "pegging up" rims. This lad then took a turn of six months in the Militia, and was out of work on his discharge, when I saw him, and without any idea of what he would do next. His military training had probably made him superior in some respects to what he was at 14.

7. C. W. — *Home* — Poor; rent, 4s.; father and mother both dead. C. W., two brothers and a sister all earning money. *School*—Standard IV.; "dull in school but cute enough on the streets"; character, fair; big and strong. *Jobs*—Errands, screw-cutting, stamping, brass-casting, brass-casting, cycle-making, warehouse, brass-casting. This lad appears to be steadier now than he was in the first two years after he left school, and has been at his last job nine months. His sister says he has "changed completely."

8. C. J.—*Home*—Poor, but comfortable; rent, 5s. 6d.; father, a labourer; mother, at home. *School*—Standard V.; satisfactory character; good health. *Jobs*—"Painting," at a pen factory, at rolling-mills, in brass-works. This boy appears to be pretty much as he was at school.

9. D. T.—*Home*—Just above poverty; rent, 4s.; father, in a chandelier factory, earning about 30s.; mother, at home. *School*—Standard III.; willing, honest, trustworthy; big and strong. *Jobs*—Brush-making, wagons at brewery, horse-dealer's, driving, van-boy, labouring, brass foundry, van-boy, lift attendant, taking round meat on a cart for a butcher. This boy betrays throughout his career a love of horses, and is now content with the job he has.

10. E. W.—*Home*—Superior; rent, 6s. 6d.; father, a bricklayer; mother, at home. *School*—Standard IV.; straightforward; somewhat delicate. *Jobs*—Filing, brass foundry, edging, filing, polishing. Seems quite satisfied with his present job.

11. G. J.—*Home* — Poor; rent, 4s. 6d.; father, an iron-caster, often out of work; mother, charing. *School*—Standard VI.; character, good; "fairly robust." *Jobs*—Wire-drawing, odd jobs in a factory, rolling-mill, tube-drawing. Says he is "getting on all right." A capable, strong boy.

12. G. E. — *Home* — Comfortable; rent, 4s. 9d.; father, dead; mother, at home, and earns a little for

minding a baby. *School*—Standard IV.; character and physique, good. *Jobs*—Errands, capstan, filing, polishing. He was out of a job when seen. He seems now a fairly steady and capable fellow.

13. G. L.—*Home* — Superior; rent, 5*s.* 6*d.*; father and mother dead; but G. L. lives with his elder brother's mother-in-law; *School* — Standard V.; "lazy, bad-tempered, rough"; good physique. *Jobs* — Binding machine, delivering milk, saw-mills, sorting bits of wood, tube-mills. Pretty decent sort of boy.

14. H. G.—*Home*—Good; rent, 4*s.* 9*d.*; father, a labourer; mother, at home. *School*—Standard IV.; character and physique, "average." *Jobs*—Errands, errands, van, painting and errands. This boy struck me as being rather above the average of this group in character and intellect, but is now below the average in physique.

15. H. F.—*Home*—Comfortable; rent, 7*s.*; lives with a well-to-do engineer (father, dead; mother, in asylum). *School* — Standard V.; character, sound; physique, poor. *Jobs*—Errands, filing, draw bench, dogging up, cycle trade, drilling, filing. He is a weak individual in all directions, and will never be good for any but inferior work.

16. H. A. — *Home*—Comfortable; rent, 4*s.* 6*d.*; father, a carter and caretaker; mother, at home. *School*—Standard VI.; character, fair; physique, strong. *Jobs*—Errands, van, filing, "stamping" (in spoon and fork factories). At present he seems above the average of the boys of this kind in all directions, but he is not strong enough to get into superior work. He says he is "satisfied."

17. H. E.—*Home*—Poor, but bright and clean; rent, 4*s.* 6*d.*; father, crucible pot-maker, incapacitated by asthma; mother, at home. *School*—Standard V.; character and physique fair. *Jobs*—Filing, cycle-works, emery-wheel, drilling, cycle-works, capstan. This boy

is fairly capable, but he is rather small and weak, and his hearing is bad. He is perhaps going out to an uncle in Canada to help on a farm, which would be the best thing for him.

18. H. J.—*Home*—Very poor; rent, 4*s.* 6*d.*; father committed suicide after almost drinking himself to death; mother earns a pittance by mounting brass knobs at a factory. *School*—Standard V.; character and physique, fairly good. *Jobs*—Tinning, "tipping stair rods," "taking off" at a printer's, "beating," tube-mill, rolling-mill, errands, rolling-mill, rolling-mill. This boy's frequent change of jobs seems to have been largely motived by his anxiety to get as much money as possible for his mother; but he is not, and never has been, good for any but unskilled work.

19. H. W.—*Home*—Filthy, but not in want; rent, 4*s.* 6*d.*; father looks after horses; mother earns a little by taking in washing. *School*—Standard IV.; character, unsatisfactory; bodily strength, good. *Jobs*—Filing, filing, filing and errands, polishing. This boy's physique now seems to be unsatisfactory, but otherwise he is rather above the average of this kind of boy.

20. J. R.—*Home*—Poor, but clean; rent, 4*s.* 6*d.*; father a caster, rendered all but incapable through an accident while a soldier; mother, at home. *School*—Standard VI.; character, good; physique, "big, but delicate-looking." *Jobs*—Errands, errands, soldering, rolling-mill, capstan lathe. Is above average in all respects, and dissatisfied with his prospects.

21. J. F.—*Home*—Respectable, but poor; rent, 4*s.*; father, owing to age (60), only getting about £1, doing odd work in a brass factory; mother, at home. *School*—Standard VI.; character, unsatisfactory; physique, good. *Jobs*—Errands, paper-hanging, rolling-mill, annealing and odd jobs, rolling-mill, errands, rolling-mill, errands, polishing, errands, "casting." This boy has, luckily for himself, got into the factory of an exceedingly

good, small employer, who is apparently keeping him steady. But for this fact he would seem to have been racing headlong towards unemployableness.

22. K. W.—*Home*—Dirty and poor; rent, 5*s.* 6*d.*; father, "a painter" earning little; mother, takes in washing and minds babies. *School*—Standard IV.; character and physique, ordinary. *Jobs*—Skimming on a lathe, "laying on" at a printer's, plumbing, warehouse, labouring. This boy seems quite above the average of this class, and is trying to get better work than labouring.

23. K. L.—*Home*—Bright and cosy; rent, 4*s.* 6*d.*; father (an enameller) now in the United States; mother, at home. K. L. and his three brothers are all earning money for the home. *School*—Standard VI.; character, superior; weakly. *Jobs*—Van, van, polishing, emery wheel, sorting galvanisers. A superior boy. The father is hoping to have all the family out to America in a few months.

24. L. B.—*Home*—Comfortable; rent, 4*s.* 9*d.*; father, French polisher (occasionally has to go to an asylum); mother, at home. *School*—Standard V.; character, excellent; physique, fair. *Jobs*—Baker's assistant, errands, boot-shop, tube drawing, "taking off" at a printer's, page in a club, errands, butcher's assistant, van, baker's assistant. This boy was out of a job when we met. He is a likeable boy, and wants to go in for "bread moulding," which is his nearest approach to a trade.

25. L. T.—*Home*—Poor and dirty; rent, 4*s.* 3*d.*; father at iron foundry (irregular work); mother, charing. *School*—Standard IV.; character, ordinary; robust. *Jobs*—Stamping, glass factory, emery bobbing, cleaning horses and doing odd jobs, riveting.

26. M. D.—*Home*—Comfortable and bright; rent, 6*s.* 6*d.*; father, a fitter; mother, at home. *School*—Standard VI.; character, good; well-developed. *Jobs*—Warehouse, printer's, cycle works, electrical works, warehouse, cycle works, milling machine, metal works,

cycle works. A lad above the average in character and physique; his father refused to have him in his shop because he "wasn't clever enough."

27. M. J.—*Home*—Superior; rent, 6*s.*; father, a skilled gas-worker; mother, at home. *School*—Standard VI.; character, good; strong. *Jobs*—Errands, railway lorry, cotton carding, railway lorry. A boy above the average in all respects. He says he is looking out for a better job, and is certain that he will "get the chuck" when he is eighteen.

28. P. W.—*Home*—Good; rent (with shop), 8*s.* 6*d.*; father keeps an aviary; mother, at home. *School*—Standard V.; character, satisfactory; physique, fair. *Jobs*—Crockery shop, milling, errands, in kitchen of a hotel, driving a cart. His father says he likes his present job "because it's easy, and he doesn't have to learn anything." The boy seems quite apathetic as regards his future.

29. R. J.—*Home*—Good; rent (with shop), 8*s.*; father, a labourer, and keeps ironmonger's shop; mother at home and in shop. *School*—Standard IV.; character and physique, satisfactory. *Jobs*—Emery wheel, binding machine, filing, van, file and float, filing, van, dressing brass candles. He tells me he has three times "tried to get into engineering," but he is only fit for mechanical or labouring work.

30. S. J.—*Home*—Superior; rent, 6*s.* 6*d.*; father, steel plater; mother, at home. *School*—Standard VII. (low in class); character, "peculiar, needed watching"; strong and wiry. *Jobs*—Small tools factory, filing, with father at steel-plating factory, van, tin factory, milling. A boy above the average in all respects, who might conceivably have got into skilled work.

31. T. H.—*Home*—Comfortable, but poor; rent, 4*s.* 9*d.*; father, a polisher earning good money; mother, at home. *School*—Standard VI.; character, very fair; strong in physique. *Jobs*—Errands, polishing, drilling and

tapping, tube-mills, capstan, bottling. An inferior boy; now of very poor physique.

Conclusions concerning Boys of Class II., Group B.

These thirty-one careers, that have been so summarily dismissed, are those that demand the most earnest attention. Neither the wastage of the ability of a small fraction of first-rate boys, nor the depression of a further small fraction into unemployableness, is so momentous as the wholesale Manufacture of Inefficiency in process with boys of the type now under consideration. These thirty-one colourless individuals, devoid of conspicuous qualities or conspicuous defects, are characteristic of the bulk of Boy Labour in Birmingham.[1] They are typical in the homes they come from, in the second-rate achievement at school, in the work they do, and in the drab future ahead of them. When we talk of "the masses," we ought to picture to ourselves an aggregation of individuals whose upbringing has been of the kind here described.

Let us sum up the data already presented :—

The Home.—Three of the homes from which these boys come are of distinctly superior type, *i.e.* better working-class households. In seven of the homes the woman goes out to work, which is a sure indication of poverty approaching destitution. The other twenty-one are all poor, but none of them poverty-stricken. Yet in them all, a few shillings more or less is a serious consideration in the household. The usual residence is one of three rooms, with a rent of about 4*s.* 6*d.* The quality of the home bears no well-defined relation, within the income limits here under consideration, to the amount of income. It is quite easy to find bright, clean homes supported by pitiful wages; and dirty, slovenly homes supported by good wages. But although there is no invariable or direct ratio, it is a fact that,

[1] Cf. Introduction, pp. 3 and 7.

generally speaking, the home tends to become cleaner and pleasanter as the income increases. The household suffers the most if the woman is forced out to work. In a large majority of cases, however, the man's wages are sufficient, augmented as they often are by the earnings of grown-up sons and daughters, to enable the woman to stay at home. Only six of the fathers are skilled artisans, earning wages above 30*s*. Six fathers are dead; two are too ill to work; four others are rendered poor wage-earners through illness or old age. Of those who are deceased or incapacitated, only three were skilled workers. One man keeps an aviary and one a public-house.

Thus a large majority of these lads, who seem naturally fitted for inferior places in the industrial army, have fathers who took such places themselves. But so far as I could discover, the fathers were not wastrels, with the single exception of the man who was a slave to drink and committed suicide. One mother was in an asylum, but in all the other cases where the mother was still alive (that is in all but three) the mother appeared to be fully occupied—in seven cases earning money and in twenty cases doing only household work.

School Record.—The school reports depend so much on the personal standards of the teacher that we must be careful not to base too much upon them. Probably, however, they give us a fairly accurate indication of what each boy was like when he left school. The Standard attained at school is some guide to the boy's intellectual powers; the teacher's estimate of the boy's physique is probably fairly correct; and while a term like "satisfactory" is most inconclusive when applied to character, which is so complex, such a designation indicates that the boy had neither arresting defects nor arresting virtues. Where the boy verges to an extreme in character, either of goodness or badness, the teacher remembers him more vividly and has noted it on the report sent to me.

Only two boys of this group reached Standard VII., and both of those were low in the class; eight reached Standard VI.; eleven reached Standard V.; eight reached Standard IV.; and one got only as far as Standard III. These are obviously boys whose intellectual powers, with few exceptions, are not first rate. Their schoolmasters would not usually attempt to get them into skilled work. Only three seem to have been noticeably inferior in physique; the rest were healthy enough on leaving school. Only four were noted by their teacher as being conspicuously unsatisfactory in character; twelve of them received commendatory characters; but over one only did the teacher venture on anything like "excellent" as a description; the remainder were "fair," "satisfactory," and so forth. So that these lads appear mostly to be featureless boys, who have no great force of character for good or for evil. Taking the school reports as a whole, they present us with a record of boys of an inferior grade, but not of boys with vicious tendencies.

Industrial Career.—On an average these boys have had rather more than five jobs apiece. This would be in a period averaging almost exactly three years. A job is kept for a year or more only in rare cases, and it is quite certain that the number of jobs here allocated to these youths is under- rather than over-stated. It is quite impossible for the boy to recall (and of course he has no desire to state) the very short catch-jobs into which every boy drops now and then. In most cases he has given the Exchange officials and myself only the jobs that lasted for at least a few weeks.

Apparently just about half of them were employed while at school in such occupations as helping in a shop, delivering milk, selling papers, running errands. One of them has had four jobs, all in the brass line; one (D. T.) has betrayed a love of horses throughout his career. None of the others seem to have had any aim or

"consecutiveness" in their industrial careers. They change occupation as often as they change jobs. The effects of their nomadic careers and of their uneducative work will be fully considered in the later chapter on Industrial Conditions.

Social Influences.—Ten of the thirty-one attend Clubs, in almost every case for the games. Four go to Church regularly and one not as often as his mother would like! Two unquestionably go to Sunday School, and in a third case the mother told me she was "given to understand that Tommie went." Not one goes to any continuation classes. Only one of these boys (H. G.), so far as I could discover, read good literature, and he also went to a Club and a Sunday School. One boy told me frankly that he "had chucked up reading" since he left school and now only looked at "the cases" in the paper; another said he read only "horribles"! Every one of them appears to read the cheap literature liberally supplied for boys. They all go to the Picture Palace, usually about twice a week (one boy whom I called to see had been five times in the previous week). Most of them patronise also Music Halls and Football Matches. These Social Influences, and their effects upon the boys, are made the subject-matter of Chapter VII.

The impression which I received of these boys, both from talking to the parents and from one or more interviews with the boys, was usually confirmatory of the school teacher's estimate. The bodily strength had seemingly been maintained unimpaired; but where the physique was weak at school, there had been further deterioration since. In character and intelligence the boys seemed to be the colourless individuals that they were at 14. There are some who will be gratified to think that nearly half of all the boys investigated have got into the unskilled work for which Nature seems to have fitted them. It is true that these thirty-one boys seem certain to become unskilled men, like their fathers before them; and that

in this they are doing neither better nor worse than their school records suggested. There is, moreover, no tragedy in their becoming lower-grade workmen. The crying evil lies in the manufacture of unskilled workers, *who are also inefficient*. Except from the meanest commercial standpoint, these years of adolescence have been wasted. Industry has lost the competent workers, and the nation has lost the capable citizens, who, during this period of growth, ought to have been given a training commensurate with the dignities and duties of adult life.

CHAPTER IV.

BOYS OF CLASS III.: APPARENTLY DESTINED FOR "UNEMPLOYABLES."

We come now to the boys of Class III. Judging by their present physique and personality, these boys seem certain to take the lowest places in the ranks of industry; or, if we employ this military metaphor, perhaps we ought to think of them as camp followers rather than as members of the rank and file. They seem unfitted for regular unskilled work. They will become casual labourers, or loafers, or worse. They will be more or less parasitic upon society.

Of course, once again it must be insisted upon that this verdict is in the nature of a prophecy which can only be verified as years pass by. But after coming into close contact with these boys, making careful inquiries concerning their home, parentage, and school records, and often subsequently discovering what charitable agencies and, in some cases, the police, had to say of them, I feel very strongly that the future here predicted for each of these lads will, in the majority of cases, be only too surely verified by his after-career. The facts upon which these judgments are grounded are given in detail, which will enable the reader to form his own opinion as to the accuracy of the writer's conclusions.

Another consideration increases the probability that these lads will degrade into Unemployableness. During the Transition to Manhood (between 18 and 22) there

comes the period when the boy requires adult wages and when the employer refuses such a wage to the least satisfactory applicants. For a long time the boy will drift, refusing "kid's wages" and unable to get full-paid regular employment. A few weeks of unemployment is often sufficient to drive him to picking up a living in casual ways on the streets. Once he has begun this kind of life, it becomes exceeding difficult for him ever to recover himself.[1]

Group A.

FOUR BOYS WHOSE SCHOOL RECORDS WERE PROMISING.

In Group A we may place four lads whose school records indicate that they might at least have become unskilled workers. If we were judging by what they were at 14, instead of by what they are at 17, we should place them in Class II.

1. F. A. comes from one of the vilest homes I have ever had the misfortune to enter. The mother has been dead about a year, which may help to explain the stench and litter in which the inmates of the house were living. This family has been helped several times by the City Aid Society. The father is a cylinder-tester by trade, but has been often out of work latterly. The mother did brush-making until bronchitis carried her off. F. A. has one sister at home, too delicate to do anything but very light work, and four sisters and one brother at school. The boy has a good report both as to character and physique from his last school; and he was in Standard VI. To-day he seems to be of the "Unemployable type" and has certainly deteriorated both in mind and character. He has been at tool-making, a blacksmith's, a brass-works, a jeweller's,

[1] This point is fully developed in Chap. VIII., p. 203.

errands, cycle-works, and is now again at errands earning 9s. per week.

2. G. W. is another lad who appears to have deteriorated considerably since leaving school. He reached Standard VI. and had a good record for conduct. He was "not strong, poor health at times." To-day he is very inferior in intelligence, seems absolutely wanting in moral fibre, and his physique is obviously poor. He looks like an Unemployable. His mother has been for seven years in an asylum, but the grandmother keeps the home decent. She tells me that the father is "always ill." He earns about £1 per week at a fender-works. The father's brother also lives—or exists—in the house. He is a hopeless cripple suffering from varicose veins. The boy's industrial career is one that would help to explain his deteriorating. The following have been his occupations, but probably the list is incomplete:—Plating, filing, rolling-mills (three times), errands, rolling-mills, gas-fitting, brass-works, rolling-mills, rolling-mills.

3. Judged merely by his school career, J. W. might have become a skilled worker. He was a Standard VII. boy, his physique was "very good," his character was "good in school." Home influences and bad companions seem to have ruined him. His father used to be on the railway, but got sacked for stealing. Then he had a fried fish shop, but when I visited the house, was out of work. The home, however, showed many signs of luxury, including a piano, and was fairly well kept. Both father and mother seem inferior characters, and my impression is confirmed by the school teacher's personal knowledge. The boy has had nearly twenty jobs, mostly as errand-boy, van-boy, and in rolling-mills. He does not look strong physically,—his intellect is poor, and what strength of character he had seems to have entirely disappeared. He is now at a rolling-mills and "thinks he has a chance of getting on there."

4. M. C. is the last of these four lads whose school records seem to offer the hope that at least they might have been unskilled workers. This boy was at Marston Green Cottage Homes for four and a half years, and though a rough sort of fellow, he was—the Superintendent says—"a sharp boy in school." He was in Standard VI. at the Elementary School afterwards, and satisfactory in character. In physique he was "rather poor, undersized." The whole of M. C.'s family combined could not recollect all of his jobs, but the main ones are:—helping in a shop, errands, power press, polishing, rolling-mills, polishing, errands, labouring, van, errands. His present job is one of straightening wire out at a large brass factory, and he asserts that he means to stick to it. The boy's father was a glass-beveller who died of consumption eight years ago. M. C. alleges as the main reason for leaving his jobs that his mother has been poor and didn't bother so long as he brought home the money. This is perhaps true, but one of his brothers remarked of him, "He's changed because he likes change," and this seems to be the most accurate diagnosis of the case. He is not at all dejected, but is a merry, irrepressible youth. He seems constitutionally unstable, and irresponsible. His intelligence is low and his physique not good,—to say nothing of his smallness.

Conclusions concerning Boys of Class III., Group A.

The Home.—The income has for a long time been more than sufficient in the homes of G. W. and J. W. In the other two cases there is just enough at the present time; but a few years ago, with children at school instead of earning, there was serious poverty. The other factors in all four homes are unsatisfactory:—F. A.'s mother has been dead a year and the home is now of the vilest sort;

M. C.'s father has been dead eight years. G. W.'s mother has been in an asylum seven years; J. W.'s parents are both unsatisfactory characters, and the father was recently sacked for stealing. Thus probably the home influences help to account for the deterioration since school. No one of the youths is in touch with any elevating influence. Only one has ever been to a Club.

Industrial Career.—F. A. has had seven jobs; M. C. and G. W. about twelve; J. W. about fifteen. They give no satisfactory reasons for changing their places. But the mother of G. W. said with pride in her voice, "He'll never leave until he sees a better job, and if he does, he always goes for it." The changing is due to this desire for more money, and also to the boy's silliness. Frequent changes of this sort can hardly fail to act perniciously on the boy's character; and the impression one gets is that none of these boys is now capable of holding a job for long.

School Record and Deterioration.—These four boys were all apparently well fitted for steady unskilled labour: one of them might have become a skilled worker. In three years they have so deteriorated as to be, apparently, unfit for regular work of any sort. In this depression from the class to which they normally belong, they correspond to those thirteen boys of Group A in Class II. who have failed to get into skilled work. They illustrate vividly the Manufacture of Inefficiency which we see everywhere to be going on, and they must be typical of a large number of other boys in Birmingham. Careful placing at the outset of their career and the contact of a friend for the next few years, might have saved every one of these boys from reaching such an unfortunate position.

Group B.

FOUR BOYS OF MARKED PHYSICAL DEFICIENCY.

Almost all the boys of Class III. are to some extent physically defective, but four of them are especially handicapped by bodily weakness. In fact, we may say that in these four cases it is their physical deficiency rather than any mental or moral defect that has brought them to a condition which makes their future outlook rather hopeless.

1. The first of these is G. J. He reached Standard VII. and his school record is good in everything except physique. The teacher notes that "The whole family have a poor appearance physically," a statement completely borne out by my own observations. The father is always poorly ; the Children's Care Committee notes of the younger brother, "well-behaved, diligent ; has been hindered by long illnesses, but is not mentally dull." G. J. himself created a feeling of compassion because of his wretched appearance ; weak, white, inert. The home is a superior one and its brightness did credit to the industry and skill of the refined woman who looked after it. The father's work, crate-making, is irregular owing to his physical condition. A few years ago the City Aid Register notes that the family applied for help and received it. But now there are three boys over school age who between them contribute about £1 to the family income. G. J. persisted in his first employment at a rolling-mills for a year and his wages rose from 6*s*. to 8*s*. He left—probably under pressure from his home—because the firm would not give him more money. He then assisted a plumber for nearly a year, and got first 9*s*. and then 10*s*. in wages. He left this, apparently, because his employer found him unequal to the work, and had two months of "pickling" in a rolling-mill. This "didn't suit" him, and he was obliged to give up

the 10*s*. he earned there for a less arduously gained 8*s*. at a rubber-works. He says he has no prospects of advance here and would like another place. He is good enough by nature, but is completely wanting in force of character ; he has a dull, dazed manner that is probably the result of his wretched physique. He needs medical attention and work of a light kind—perhaps office-work would have been the best for him. But he has little chance now of getting into suitable employment.

2. The case of H. F. is in many respects similar and even more deplorable. His father died just after the birth of this boy (the only child). The mother has earned an income by doing cleaning and taking in washing. The boy looks like a ghost, and his mother is afraid he will be consumptive. He suffers from a form of dropsy. "It's this water—it flies to his head and then in this place and that." The mother says it has blighted the lad's life. His first work was taking round bread for 3*s*. a week, which he quickly abandoned for a more remunerative job at drilling. Here he stayed for thirteen months. Then he went into a place where he did the light work of "scratch-brushing" and core-making for a year and a half. He was not strong enough to learn moulding, as he had hoped to do. Then he had three weeks in a rolling-mill, but found the work too hard and too dirty, and the heat too overpowering. He next did milling for six weeks, and lost the job because he broke a cutter ; he had either to make the loss good or leave. Next, he took labelling at a bottler's for three months. And this he has recently substituted for a job on the capstan drill. His purpose was to learn the trade of iron-moulding, but his physique is not strong enough to support this ambition ; in fact he ought not to be doing hard manual labour of any kind.

This lad's character at school was excellent and he was near the top in ability. In his interests he presented a vivid contrast to the majority of the boys interviewed in all three classes. He has belonged to

the Library for six years and read much first-class literature. He loves drawing, and the dream of his life is to have a piano of his own. He started going to evening classes, but found this beyond his strength. He has a refined, artistic, somewhat effeminate temperament, and ought to have been placed when he left school in a position where his gifts would have found expression.[1]

3. The third of this little group of boys who are physically handicapped, D. H., is rather inferior to the two former in other respects, as well as in physique. He was always a weakling, but his condition was rendered far worse by a kick on the head that he got when hiding in a hayrick, at the age of 10. This caused brain-trouble, and he has always since been affected. His father and mother are pleasant homely people, and the father's earnings as a striker in a coach factory, supplemented by those of the four children who are earning, are sufficient to keep things comfortable. D. H. reached Standard VI., and the schoolmaster says of him: "A harmless lad, much handicapped, both physically and mentally, by bodily weakness." This sums him up also at the present time. He has been in a brass factory doing odd jobs; then helping to fit up electric kettles, then in the time office of a factory; then errands, packer, errands, packer. He cannot go near machinery because of his liability to fainting fits, and some light labour of the sort he is doing seems to be all he is fit for. He can never be much use in the industrial world.

4. The fourth member of this group of four is H. D. His home is a poverty-stricken one; the father's earnings as a brush-maker were never much, and he is now dead; the mother earns a little at umbrella-work. There is one other boy earning besides H. D. and another boy at school. My knowledge of the home conditions makes the following statements of the head-teacher

[1] See p. 119, where a page of this boy's diary is introduced.

more comprehensible: "Physique—bad, half-starved; character — very good; naturally willing, but unable to accomplish as much as might be expected from a boy of his age, owing to being chronically in a semi-starved condition. He was of a timid, nervous disposition; tried hard to please and, as far as he was physically able, gave satisfaction. If the lad becomes a failure, it is entirely owing to lack of nourishment in boyhood." Probably the teacher's emphasis on the dire results of under-nutrition is not much exaggerated, and a great part of the boy's ill-fortune may be due to this cause. The lad had free breakfasts, but these are not sufficient, in very many cases, to supply the deficiencies of the home.

For a year and a half this boy continued in one place as errand-boy, and then illness took him away from it. He was obliged to give up work for six months while an abscess ran its course. Then for three months he did "cork-drawing" at a place where bar-fitting was done. He next had a job at errands, and his being sent out "in all winds and weathers" again affected his health, and he went in for wire-bar-rolling for four months. This he left for his last job of "striking-in" metal rollers. He seemed more sensible, judging by his replies to questions, than most of the boys of this class, and, indeed, in spite of his under-feeding, he reached Standard VI. at school. But in physique he was wretched, and his character was quite lacking in force. He seemed certain to be useless in the industrial world.

Conclusions concerning Boys of Class III., Group B.

The failure of these boys seems to have been almost entirely due to their poor physique. All the homes are poor in point of income; probably, therefore, insufficient nutrition intensified the physical weakness at and after school. D. M. and H. F. were saved by their parents

from employment out of school hours; the other two suffered from this additional burden. Except for their physical weakness, these lads were first-rate at school: two were in Standard VII. and two in Standard VI. All had good records of character.

During the three years since they left school they have been subjected to undue physical strain in the unpleasant, burdensome, and often unhealthy conditions in which boys are forced to work. With good feeding and medical attention, every one of these boys might have become at manhood a capable worker. As it is, they show conspicuously the physical deterioration which must be caused in greater or less degree in large numbers of youths at this period. And we must believe that their cases are illustrative of many in every great city;—boys who are known by their teachers to be unfit for heavy work, but whose defects are not marked enough to alarm the Factory Surgeon. The best prayer we can offer for these boys is that they will speedily become such downright failures, that they will fall into the hands of some agency which will give them specialised treatment.

Group C.

NINE BOYS WHOSE SCHOOL RECORDS PROMISED PROBABLE UNEMPLOYABLENESS.

The next ~~inne~~ nine boys of this Class seem naturally unfit for regular employment. Their school records are a prediction of what they must become—left, as of course they all were, to their own resources.

1. A. J.'s father has been dead for fourteen years. The income of the home is provided by A. J., the mother, who does cleaning, etc., and two ill-looking girls, who are both in a pen factory. For five and a half years the boy was in the Marston Green Cottage Homes, and

the Superintendent says of him, "He was a thin, delicate and rather miserable sort of boy, and below the average in ability. With regard to character, I know of nothing against the boy." This accords with the estimate of his school teacher, who finds him rather below average in physique and character. He reached Standard IV. This boy has had (on his own confession) fourteen jobs :— gun-factory, errands, "taking-off" at a printer's, pen factory, glass factory, "casting," "casting," labouring, bottle-washing, riveting, brass factory, rolling-mill, type-founding, brass factory. He was out of work when I saw him and quite unconcerned about it. He lost both his "casting" jobs because he was not strong enough ; but is proud of the fact that he "chucked himself out" of all the others. He says he always left for "more money." His mother is angry with him for drifting as he does, and says "he just gives it up at the least thing, for no particular reason." Her efforts to take the place of a father (and she boasts that "no one 'as 'ad more beatings than 'e 'as") have been unsuccessful in keeping the boy steady. He is a merry, unmanageable, dirty, reckless boy who will before long find his high spirits sorely tried by the difficulties of earning a living. His intellect is as small and weak as his body.

2. A. A.'s father, after being ill and often out of work for some years, has recently died. The mother earns a little, the eldest girl gets 5*s.* 6*d.*, and A. A. brings home 12*s.* This is sufficient to keep themselves and two little schoolgirls from extreme poverty. A. A. was "very low" even in Standard III., from which he left school ; his character was "fair" ; his physical condition was "weak." Such a boy would be certain to emerge from three years' industrial experience in inferior condition to that which he possessed on entering. And this lad seems to have been exceptionally unlucky. He entered a cycle-works and was getting on well for eight months, when—owing to the seasonality which marks

the cycle industry—he lost his job through shortage of work. He took dipping for two months, and lost that also through shortage of work. Then he was at emery-bobbing for two months; and was summoned back from that to his first job again, as the cycle trade once more became busy. In course of time, as trade again became slack, he was once more turned adrift. Then he tried errands, and left it because it wore his boots out. He followed this with two jobs at rolling-mills, losing the first because he was late and giving up the second because he got "drownded in oil." He is now at emery-bobbing, and says he will stay at it "as long as they don't turn me off." He is a very poor sort of individual, and seems almost certain to become a casual within the next few years.

3. A. W.'s father has been a railwayman on the Midland for twenty-five years. His mother keeps the home clean and comfortable. She is in dread lest her husband should turn the boy out of doors for loafing about and throwing up his jobs, and implored me to try to influence the boy to be steadier. "'E doesn't seem to care whether 'e keeps a job or not," she told me. He has been at filing, van-work, emery-bobbing, cycle-tapping, milling, milling, brass factory, cycle works, milling. He was at the bottom of the Third Standard when he left school; through the fifty-eight weeks during which he attended his last school he made only eighteen weeks of full attendance. He came to this school from Standard I. in his previous school, at the age of twelve years and nine months. The best his teacher can say of his character is that he was "no trouble when in school"; and he informs me that physically he was small and debilitated. Usually speaking, the boys of Birmingham are never long out of a job, but this boy has been out a great deal, and had been unemployed for several weeks when I ran across him. This must have been through sheer laziness, as there is always work of

some sort for a boy. He is pretty certainly destined to be unemployable.

4. B. W.'s father is a plasterer and often out of work. B. W. took a low place in Standard V. The teacher believes that he was underfed, and says he was "not at all robust." The boy "seemed quiet, inoffensive, willing, docile; but no particular ability, not strong-minded, easily led, no initiative or effort." From a personal knowledge of the boy, he thinks he has now lost his self-respect. I have on my notes of his physique, "Exceptionally poor; to see this boy aroused a feeling of pity." He seemed quite dead in both character and intellect. He had several jobs as an errand-boy, then tried the emery-wheel for eight months, and is now at filing, getting 8*s*. The mother and he both say that he changed his jobs to "better himself"—that is, to get more money.

5. B. A. is a boy who might perhaps go in the first group of those boys in this class whose poor physique was the main factor in destroying their chances in the industrial world. But he is inferior in other respects as well. Perhaps his bodily condition was responsible for his school conduct, which is described in these words:—"Was naturally lazy; would work neither in school nor in field (organised games) without much pushing, preferring to lounge, but had very fair ability. He was near the top of Standard V." He seems now to be very weak in intelligence and personality, and his physical condition is apparently less satisfactory than it was at school. He had a long spell of eighteen months at a rolling-mill after leaving school, then a job at labelling for a month, and another in a brass factory. Then acting under the doctor's advice, he got an open-air job, delivering milk. This he felt certain he was about to lose, owing to his employer developing tuberculosis, which would force him to give up business. What he will do in the future is therefore problematical; but he is not strong enough for any but very inferior work. The home is

decent, but very poor. The father was a cabinet-dresser, but is now more dead than alive as the results of what his wife calls "a paralysm stroke." She keeps things going with a greengrocer's shop; and another son and daughter earn a little.

6. S. T. from 11½ years of age to 12 was at a Truant School, and at 13 went off to an Industrial School. At that age he left the Elementary School in Standard I. The father died just before his son was born. His step-father is an engineer earning sufficient to keep a comfortable home. His mother thought that his not having a father was the explanation of his industrial failure, and she is bitterly disappointed at his present position. The boy has had the following jobs, and it will be interesting to give his reasons for abandoning each in turn:—(1) Band-making—"such unpleasant work"; (2) van—"such late hours"; (3) tin-cleaning—"hands cut and burnt"; (4) shaking and drying out—did not like factory work, found it "too heavy"; (5) errands—had to get up so early, work "too heavy"; (6) he is now employed to "chain the carts of a Company as they go up the hill." He is small, but seemed fairly strong; weak in intelligence; and, as far as could be judged, indifferent as to his future and willing to drift.

7. T. B. comes from the poorest home of all those visited. His father has lost all his lower teeth through lead-poisoning in the factory where he used to make medals, etc.; he suffers from colic and is turned 60; it is fourteen years since he had any regular work; and he is now fit for nothing but carrying sandwich-boards and doing odd jobs. The mother makes about 3*d.* an hour for making brass military chains for soldiers' uniforms; and a heap of these glittering ornaments presented a very vivid contrast to the filth of the room. She says that "when the work's on," she sometimes continues from six in the morning to twelve at night over her work. Her eldest boy is a lance-corporal, of whom

she is extremely proud; the youngest is still at school; the middle one is T. B. There were also in the room two filthy little children, all but naked, whom the woman looked after for a neighbour at 6*s*. a week.

The father said of the boy, "We didn't know what to put 'im to; we thought we'd let 'im tackle two or three jobs and then see what suited 'im." Probably the boy has had several catch-jobs besides those mentioned here, but these are the main ones:—(1) Polishing—"chucked myself out," "went for more money"; (2) errands—"wanted more money"; (3) rolling-mill—"such filthy work"; (4) polishing—"more money"; (5) polishing—"too far away." When I saw him he had been out of work six weeks, and was apparently finding it difficult to get a place at a decent wage. He seemed very depressed and inclined to blame himself for his failure. He was a weak, mealy-faced boy, with no force of character and not much intelligence. It looked as if with him unemployableness had already more or less set in. At school he was an inferior boy all round, and left low down in Standard IV.

8. W. D.'s home presents features almost as pitiable as those of T. B. The father used to be a tool-maker, but he is now out of regular work, and is a wastrel. Practically the whole burden of looking after herself and four children has fallen upon the mother. She is a woman of refined nature; she says she married her husband against her parents' wishes; and in this case their judgment appears to have been right and her instincts wrong. Things were so bad some few years ago that she was forced into the Workhouse with her children. There she was given rope-picking to do, and found her surroundings such a hell, that after a fortnight she came away and brought her children out with her. Then she picked up a living by hawking plants from door to door, and finally was able to get a small clothes-shop, which she still keeps. During this

time her husband did practically nothing to help her. Things are more comfortable now. W. D. is earning a little, and his sister, who has just left school, gets 6*s.* 6*d.* in a pin factory. The two younger children are still being taught.

W. D. left school from near the lowest place in Standard IV. His bodily strength was poor. He was "quiet and unobtrusive; lacking intelligence and interest in most subjects; never troublesome." His mother thinks that he is "not properly right," and this seems to be true. He is a kind-hearted, likeable boy; but so tiny as to be little better than a dwarf, and needing special consideration and treatment instead of the rough-and-tumble of the industrial world. His own account of his career is worth recording in some detail. He began his life as an independent wage-earner by selling ice-creams from a barrow. "I used to look at the pictures on the barrow, and then he asked me to come and help." For this he got 1½*d.* for every shillingsworth of ices sold. He left it because the Signor who owned the barrow "used to shout" at him. Then he had a place in a boot-shop, standing outside and running errands. "I asked for a rise and he said I was very dull." A pair of boots had also disappeared, and W. D. was dismissed for this supposed delinquency and also because he "asked for more." He next tried his fortune at a printer's, and says the man promised "to teach him the trade," but when W. D. reminded him of this after four months, he said, "I can't be bothered to learn you a trade." He next tried filing buckles, and got dismissed after three months for asking for a rise. He then did odd jobs in a stamping-shop, and abandoned this place because "it was such a funny foreman"—"He shouted at me if I did anything wrong, and if I did anything right, he shouted." Then he tried filing, and left because he was kept so late at night (hours, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.). Then he did work at a brass-founder's, getting out the

barrels and running errands. He had just recently thrown this up "to get a better job," and was, when I last saw him, out of work. He says he wants to learn engineering!

9. W. J.'s father has been dead fifteen years. His mother earns a pittance as a cutter at a factory, working from seven in the morning to six at night. She seemed ill, broken, and tired of life, and spoke most bitterly of this son:—"If 'e don't get better, 'e'll 'ave to go"; "I've 'ad more trouble with 'im than with all the other eight put together." His teacher says his physique was good at school, but he looks white and weak at the present time. He was low in Standard V., and "an uncertain type of lad." His master says he has "seen him many times lounging about" since he left the school; and the boy appears to be one of those who are as "unstable as water." He had the acuteness of the streets, and his mother is afraid that before long he will get into trouble with the police. His mother and he both told me independently that he had had fourteen or fifteen jobs, but it was beyond the boy's power to remember them all. They were mostly in rolling-mills, where "you get more money." He was "shearing" at a factory when I saw him, but he has probably moved two or three times since then.

Conclusions concerning Boys of Class III., Group C.

The antecedents of the nine boys included in Group C. are such as to leave us no cause for surprise that they are turning out unsatisfactory. This can be best shown in tabular form.

The table on the opposite page gives a rough idea of the parentage and homes of these lads:—

HOME RECORDS.

Boy.	Kind of Home.	Income of Home.	Description concerning Father.	Description concerning Mother.
A. A.	Unsatisfactory.	Scarcely sufficient.	Dead (recently) (ivory-cutter. Low wages for years).	At home.
B. A.	Indifferent.	Scarcely sufficient.	Paralysed (3 years), was a cabinet-dresser.	Greengrocer's shop.
T. B.	Indifferent.	Sufficient.	Polisher.	At home.
W. D.	Unsatisfactory (not good father).	Insufficient.	Casual and wastrel.	Clothes-shop.
A. J.	Unsatisfactory.	Insufficient.	Dead (14 years).	Cleaning, etc.
W. J.	Unsatisfactory.	Insufficient.	Dead (15 years).	Cutter at factory.
S. T.	Indifferent.	Sufficient.	Dead (17 years). Step-father, engineer in regular work.	At home.
A. W.	Indifferent.	Sufficient.	Railwayman in regular work.	At home.
B. W.	Indifferent.	Sufficient.	Plasterer (work irregular).	At home.

SCHOOL RECORDS.

Boy.	Standard.	Physique.	Character.
A. A.	III.	Poor.	Unsatisfactory.
B. A.	V.	Poor.	Unsatisfactory.
T. B.	IV.	Good.	Satisfactory.
W. D.	IV.	Poor.	Satisfactory.
A. J.	IV.	Poor.	Unsatisfactory.
W. J.	V.	Good.	Unsatisfactory.
S. T.*	I.	Good.	Unsatisfactory.
A. W.	III.	Poor.	Satisfactory.
B. W.	V.	Poor.	Satisfactory.

* This boy was sent on to an Industrial School at 13 years of age from Standard I. at the Elementary School.

One of these boys goes to Church regularly; one attends occasionally, and also goes to a Club every week. None of the others are touched by any such agencies.

These boys will almost certainly become complete failures from an industrial and from a civic point of view. It is true that their school records promised no better, but it is by no means certain that discipline, physical training, and education during these years would not have made efficient unskilled workers of every one of them. Boys with inferior personalities like these, if left to them-

selves, run every risk at present of declining further and further during every year after leaving school.

Group D.

WASTRELS.

The last four boys in Class III. are the worst cases among those I have investigated. Two of them I have been unable to run to earth. What I saw of the other two convinces me of their worthlessness from an industrial or social point of view.

1. Concerning C. W.'s jobs I have no reliable record. He himself told me :—Tube factory (one year); looking after stables, etc. (two years); militia (six months); and now casting. The Labour Exchange record gives him two jobs, neither of which he mentioned to me. His old school teacher says :—" He worked at several places." His parents told me naïvely that he has had " a week here and a week there."

Of his home his head-teacher says :—" This lad was reared in a caravan under conditions hygienically truly awful. The parents are both densely ignorant, with little moral perception." The home had been moved from the caravan when I discovered it—it moves every few weeks—but it was still just as loathsome as when the teacher had known it. The room I saw looked more like a sea of filth and rags and rubbish than a place where human beings lived. The father was then under remand on a charge of " receiving." He says he is a hawker.

C. W. left school at the bottom of Standard IV.; " Physique good, but stamina poor " ; his character was as good as might be expected in a boy with such blood in his veins. To-day a glance at his face is sufficient to convince the least observant person that there is a kind of moral rottenness in him. His answers to the many questions I put him confirmed the impression he made

upon me. He has just completed six months in the "Special Reserve," but found the life too hard for him, and is glad to be out of it. But for that six months, he would probably be far inferior in physique and capacity to what he is.

2. L. G.'s antecedents are perhaps worse than C. W.'s. My own observations are confirmed by those of the City Aid Register and of the head-teacher of the last school L. G. attended. "This home," says the school teacher, "was absolutely a vicious one. The family were all loose and filthy, through criminal father and mother. All lazy and liars. The mother was a dirty, loose woman, often leaving the home to live with another. She was doing this so recently as six or seven months ago. There were three boys here at the same time: the two younger we were bettering rapidly, until, through my advising the Health Authorities to cleanse them, they migrated to a school a few hundred yards off, where they commenced to run up a notorious score for filthiness and irregularity. I believe that these two younger boys have both recently been locked up." At the present time the father is living with another woman and the mother with another man. The boy resides with his grandmother, a kindly, capable old body, who keeps the home comfortable on the earnings of L. G. and his two elder sisters. The two children younger than L. G. are at a Reformatory School; and the two children still younger are living with their mother.

The boy was at the bottom of the Fifth Standard when he finished his schooling. As regards physical characteristics he was a "tall, lanky boy; pale, thin face; undoubtedly addicted to personal abuse and smoking." In character, "a very shifty, slack, and most untidy boy, and withal downright verminous and dirty." He has probably had from twelve to twenty jobs, and no purpose will be served by recording the incomplete list he confessed to. He has now been selling papers on the

streets for the last six months, and probably earns anything between 10*s.* and 20*s.* per week. He said he had given up trying for a proper job. He had a good face and looked fairly strong. He was the sort of boy who seemed made for the life of the streets.

3. The father of S. J. has been dead six years. He was employed making lozenges, and appears to have been a steady worker but physically weak. The doctor said his death was due to continual breathing in a sugar-saturated atmosphere which poisoned his blood and affected the heart. After his death the mother was given work at the Infirmary for a time and then took up brush-making. She works ten hours a day at this in her own home for a small master who lives near by, and she probably earns about 8*s.* a week. With her lives another woman, also engaged in brush-work. This woman's husband has deserted her, and her four children are in the Workhouse. S. J. has two sisters (one feeble-minded, at home; the other, in service), and one younger brother, at school.

S. J.'s shortcomings are all blamed by his mother upon a bad companion of his, who appears to have exercised a sinister influence over him. He was in Standard IV., strong in physique; and, though inferior in character, the head-mistress tells me he behaved well, and was, as far as she knew, honest and kindly; he was not vicious, but he was easily led. This accords well with what his mother says of him.

She cannot recall all his jobs, but thinks he has had quite twenty. She said he had had at least twelve as errand-boy and had sold papers a great many times, and then, of course, he has had the inevitable "rolling-mills," "polishing," "filing," and so on. He has also done a good deal of "working the rattler,"—that is, getting odd jobs around the station,—and has been taken up several times by the police for loitering and obstruction. He has three times been sent to a Home, and on each

occasion thrown up the job subsequently found him. The mother has performed miracles of heroism in going to lodging-houses at midnight, etc. etc., in trying to look after the lad. But since he ran away in August, 1912, she has lost all trace of him.

4. The last of these four "unemployables" is C. E. His school Standard was IV.; he was a poor specimen in physique and had the free breakfasts; his conduct at school was not vicious, but rather colourless. The father is a wastrel, who spends a large part of his time in gaol—"no earthly use," was what the school teacher told me of his character. The mother has refused to live with either husband or son. She appears to be a good enough woman and keeps herself. The boy has now disappeared, and in spite of many inquiries I have found it impossible to trace him; but his married sister gave me a great deal of information about him. She says that he lived with her recently for eight weeks, and in that period had eleven separate jobs. She says he must have had at least fifty since he left the school. The school teacher knew enough of his after-career to confirm this statement.

Conclusions concerning Boys of Class III., Group D.

One of these four boys, who appear to be complete wastrels at seventeen, has been led away by a bad companion. His character is weak, and at this impressionable age such strong influence of an older person is not remarkable. The other three boys all appear to have rottenness in their blood. In each case the father is a worthless individual. The consummate force of heredity, which probably goes further than we can trace in determining the school record and industrial career of each boy, is here made dramatically plain.

These boys during these three years, instead of being held in close supervision and properly trained for adult

life, have been allowed to deteriorate; and this during the very period when most might have been done to save them. They are now parasitic upon society, and will cost the community dear in every way in future years. Each year a number of boys of such a kind leave the Elementary Schools and are permitted to wander forth at large to poison society.

General Conclusions regarding the Boys of Class III.

It is noteworthy that seventeen out of these twenty-one "unemployables" are boys whose antecedents promised such a result. Physical, mental, and moral defects marked them at school and probably in infancy. Heredity and early upbringing are the initial causes of their failure. Probably this result would be substantiated by larger investigations; and it would be found that the career of the Unemployable usually began, so to speak, at birth. But what is neither proved nor probable is that these lads would have so deteriorated if they had been adequately trained during adolescence. As we shall see in Chapter VI., this period provides the golden opportunity for ennobling the boy's nature and building up his physique. Social and industrial conditions have aggravated each boy's defects and offered no stimulus to his finer instincts; and in the case of four boys of greater promise, these circumstances alone have been sufficient to drag them down from their rightful place in regular wage-earning to the life of wastrels.

CHAPTER V.

THE BOY AT SCHOOL—CHILDHOOD.

It seems to be a commonly accepted view that the responsibilitity for the Manufacture of Inefficiency lies to a large extent with the Elementary School. This is the standpoint taken up by almost every employer with whom I have conversed on the subject. It is also the view of many educationists themselves. Miss Margaret McMillan, for example, writes to me :—" I have before my eyes the spectacle of the result of this curriculum. The boys can't speak. They can't think. They can't even jump properly." My own investigations have driven me to believe that this emphasis on the deficiencies of the school is falsely placed ; and that it is rather to the years of early adolescence that we must look for the causes of failure in later life.

The present chapter will attempt to estimate to what extent we are justified in holding the school accountable.

It is often forgotten by those who criticise the Elementary School how considerably its work is conditioned by Home Influences. The force of the home conditions is revealed even by so small an investigation as the present one. This has already been made apparent in a disconnected fashion in the foregoing chapters, and it will not be out of place here to sum up the results.

The following conclusions appear to be justified by the data accumulated :—

1. Boys of Class I. almost all come from homes

superior in all respects. Generally speaking, the character of the home is good, the income is adequate, the father is in better-class employment and the mother is at home. These boys, without exception, were superior in all respects at school.

2. The majority of boys of Class II., Group A., have been brought up in superior home conditions. Three of the fathers were in skilled work ; five were unskilled ; one casual ; four dead. Seven of the mothers were at home ; four at work ; two dead. Three-fourths of these boys were superior in all respects at school ; the others were not quite so satisfactory.

3. Boys of Class II., Group B., in 24 cases out of 31 come from poor or very poor homes. Rather more than half these homes are " superior " in quality ; the rest are " indifferent " or " unsatisfactory." Most of the fathers are unskilled and six are dead ; only six are in skilled occupations. Eighteen of the mothers are at home ; nine are at work ; three are dead and one is in an asylum.

There is a correspondingly less satisfactory record at school. Just under half these boys had good records for character at school ; the other half were only fair or unsatisfactory. Just over half were adjudged " good " in physique, the remainder were " fair " or " poor." Two reached Standard VII., eight Standard VI., ten Standard V., the same number Standard IV., and one only Standard III.

4. The boys of Class III. come from poor and poverty-stricken homes, usually of an unsatisfactory character. Not one father is in skilled work, four are unskilled, three are casuals, five wastrels, nine are dead. Eight of the mothers are at home, ten are at work, one is a wastrel, two are dead.

The school records correspond with the unfortunate home conditions. The bulk of the boys were seriously defective in character, physique, or ability ; often in two of these respects and sometimes in all three.

These conclusions, even when every allowance has been made for defects in classification, serve to show how intimate is the relationship between the home conditions and the school record. They are introduced at this point in order to emphasise the contention that the work which the school does is dependent to the most marked extent upon the antecedent circumstances of the boy's parentage and upbringing.

Before we criticise the results of the school work, we ought to consider carefully the many unfortunate circumstances with which the school has to contend. As you walk through the slum areas of Birmingham, through streets that seem to be filled with influences detrimental to the healthy growth of children, amid squalor, dirt, ugliness, disease, and ignorance, you gradually feel a growing regard for the school teacher, and you begin to think of the school as a veritable temple, saving these children from the forces of destruction. It is indeed, for most of them, the one great influence that lifts them out of their unfortunate environment, cares for them, trains them, and fits them for the work of life.

Let us note briefly some of the difficulties with which the school teacher is faced :—

Heredity.

There seems to be an impression widespread to-day that education can take *any* child and make of him a first-rate scholar; that the school can perform any miracle we like to demand so long as the rates will bear the burden. The school teacher, on the other hand, finds as the most palpable fact in his work the extraordinary and apparently *innate* differences in capacity between one pupil and another.[1] Every teacher

[1] "It is difficult to exaggerate the extent to which mental capacity differs in riverside schools. Brain-power is indeed born, not made" (A. Paterson, "Across the Bridges," p. 44).

knows, as a matter of personal experience, that each boy's achievements are conditioned by something in the boy himself. The natural endowment may be utilised to the full, but it cannot be created. And whereas some boys seem to be born "slow of study," others are born quick and alert. These differences in ability may be partly accounted for, as we shall see, by variations in upbringing. What I wish to insist on here is that many elementary scholars are born into the world with limited powers of self-advancement, because of their hereditary handicap.

As to the precise force of heredity in determining the natural endowment of the child, there is the greatest difference of opinion; but concerning the fact itself almost all competent observers are agreed. The difficulty in establishing reliable conclusions lies in the fact that the influence of the environment must be considered and is difficult to allow for. Elaborate tests have, however, been made upon such characteristics as the colour of the eyes and hair, the height, and what is called the "cephalic index" (the ratio of the breadth to the length of the skull). These tests—where environment could scarcely have any influence, show plainly that immediate ancestry is responsible for similarity between brothers and sisters far above that between non-related individuals. And if heredity thus influences the shape of the skull, there is every reason to suppose that it must contribute also to determine the shape and size of the brain lying within the skull-bones. Deafness is perhaps due mainly to physical causes, but its effects are conspicuous in the mental life of the individual. Now, careful experiment has proved that, of brothers and sisters of a person born deaf, no fewer than one in four is deaf; while of other people, probably not one in a thousand is deaf. A series of most elaborate and thorough experiments made upon the pupils of the Oxford Preparatory School and an Elementary School at Oxford, showed that in practically

every test of intelligence, the sons of the eminent professors and others going to the former school were markedly superior to the children going to the Elementary School. The tests were designed to rule out faculties acquired through special training, which might have been given to one set of pupils rather than the other; and the boys attending the Elementary School were all of them from comfortable homes and paid ninepence a week for their schooling. The experimenters believed themselves justified in declaring as a result of this investigation, that "the superior proficiency at intelligence tests on the part of the boys of superior parentage was inborn." [1]

This verdict is supported by almost all who have worked in similar lines of inquiry. Professor Karl Pearson states that "the mental characters in man are inherited in precisely the same way as the physical." Dr. Frederick Adams Woods in his work "Mental and Moral Heredity in Royalty" concludes:—"As regards intellectual life, environment is a totally inadequate explanation." Sir Francis Galton's judgment may be summed up in the conclusion he announces in his work on "Hereditary Genius":—"I feel convinced that no man can achieve a very high reputation without being gifted with very high abilities." Archdall Reid is perhaps the only eminent dissentient from this view, but his contention that "mental and moral qualities are not inherited in the same sense as the physical" would seem to be nullified by his admission that "educability" *is* transmitted. And we must always bear in mind that the purely physical inheritance (which is unquestioned) has mental and moral results that make this endowment almost equivalent to the transmission of mental and moral characters.[2]

[1] *British Journal of Psychology*, December 1909, p. 94, "Experimental Tests of General Intelligence," by Cyril Burt.

[2] *E.g.*, a boy born deaf will find his chances of learning at school shrink considerably; in later life he will invariably be

These conclusions, inadequate as they are, suggest that in a certain sense "No boy can rise higher than his source." Education can do far more than it has yet done to unfold the boy's nature; but the teacher's efforts are in every case conditioned by the innate "educability" of the child. In some cases, as for example with many of the boys placed in Class III., the teacher is waging an apparently hopeless battle against the "sins of the fathers."

Infantile Neglect.

The natural handicap imposed upon many of the children by heredity is very frequently aggravated by the circumstances of birth and early upbringing. Under present conditions the wastage of infant life and health (before as well as after the actual birth of the child) is appalling. One infant out of every six born in Birmingham in the year 1911 died before it reached the age of one year; in St. Mary's Ward, nearly one in three died.[1] And there is not the slightest doubt that for every infant that perishes, many other *unfit* ones survive. Poverty, ignorance and carelessness are never so terrible in the havoc they produce, as in this wholesale massacre of the innocents. And the consequence of this lack of provision is a manufacture of physical weakness (carrying with it mental and moral consequences) that will seriously hamper the work of the school and dog the sufferer throughout his life. A table given by Dr. Forsyth of the Westminster Health Society is exceedingly instructive on this point. He worked for a medical inspection

considered stupid and find employment hard to win and hard to keep. I remember seeing in a Poor Law home a little girl, the child of a syphilitic mother, who was, apparently, born with syphilis in her blood. The Superintendent told me that all her instincts were incurably immoral.

[1] Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the City of Birmingham, 1911, p. 16. Contrast Edgbaston and Harborne Ward, where the rate was one in ten; or Bournville, where it was one in sixteen.

centre established by voluntary effort for children under school age. During a period of six months he examined about 200 children. The tabulated results of his examination are as follows :—

Age . .	One.	Two.	Three.	Four.	Five.
	%	%	%	%	%
Decayed Teeth .	0	2	12	35	59
Tonsils . .	0	2	9	18	41
Adenoids . .	2	12	21	32	23
Squint . . .	0	0	0	3·5	18
Normal Children	79	46	37	18	6

Similar results have been accumulated from almost every corner of the country, and they make it plain that through the present neglect of infancy we are accumulating difficulties for the school.

The Home and the Parents.

Probably not more than one-third of the scholars attending the Elementary Schools come from homes which supplement the efforts of the school teacher.[1] In these "Superior" Homes the parents are interested in the boy's school career, and if they are unable to help the boy in his work, at any rate they co-operate as far as they can to make his education profitable ; they gladly flock to "parents' meetings," "open days," school concerts and similar functions ; and they assist the work of the school by providing a hygienic and moral atmosphere in the home.

But probably the bulk of the boys come from homes that make no contribution to the boy's education—"Indifferent" Homes, as we may call them. In such households there is indifference to the work of the school. When the parents meet the teacher, it is only to settle some point of dispute or get some gratuitous assistance.

[1] Cf. Chap. VII., Social Influences, pp. 120–124.

Domestic poverty will frequently send the boy out to work in the intervals of his schooling ; and it will render the residence so cramped and unattractive as to make the boy spend as little time in it as he can. The extent and depth of the home-life differs, of course, from one dwelling to another, but in none of them is there any real assistance to the endeavours of the school. In most of these cases the teacher is engaged in a struggle against forces which are ever active to undo his work ; the habits which the school strives to inculcate find no encouragement in the home or the streets. Mr. Paterson, speaking from actual experience, notes how a holiday even of two weeks has " played havoc with habits of attention and discipline." [1] In the case of a majority of the boys coming to the school, a process goes on which is reminiscent of that curious incident recorded in " Pilgrim's Progress." The fire, symbolising the " work of grace," while it is being continually fed by oil, is just as persistently being quenched by water.

In the " Unsatisfactory " Home, these unfortunate influences are intensified to a point which makes the school teacher's task almost impossible. Despite the boy's own interest in his work and the vigilance of the Attendance Officer, the boy is frequently kept from school and sent out to earn money by his parents. The home not uncommonly moves from place to place (as the landlord becomes pertinacious for his rent), and the boy changes his school with each migration.[2] If the head-teacher insists on the boy being cleansed of vermin, the family will move into another district and send their son to a less fastidious school. The boy suffers continually from physical handicaps bred of squalor, filth and disease. And he is schooled by his parents in

[1] A. Paterson, " Across the Bridges," p. 74.

[2] Pride in the school, which is one of the most valuable assets to the work of education, can never be built up so long as this constant movement from school to school is permissible.

a code of morals contrary at every point to the one the school teacher is striving to inculcate—with the most heart-breaking results upon his unfolding nature. My experience as Secretary of a Children's Care Committee, which looked after children coming from one of the poorest slum districts of London, has convinced me that to attempt to change radically the children coming from these vile homes is almost as hopeless as trying to drain the sea with a sieve.

Physical Defect.

The unwholesome nature of the child's everyday environment, supplementing the limitations imposed by heredity and early neglect, makes the task of the school very onerous in many ways. But perhaps the greatest obstacle to efficient education is the physical defect that is so rife among school children, springing, of course, directly from unsatisfactory conditions in the homes. How widespread this is may be judged from the following official figures for 1911 : [1]—

"Number of children having teeth requiring urgent attention, 88,000.

"Eye defects of various kinds, many children requiring spectacles, 14,000.

"Ear and throat defects, mainly enlarged tonsils or adenoids, 11,500.

"Ringworm of the scalp, often preventing children from attending school for a year or more, 1400."

It is noteworthy that the number of those requiring dental treatment exceeded by nearly two thousand the average daily attendance of scholars. When we recollect that disease has no more powerful ally than dental defects, we see that these figures form a terrible revelation of the physical evils that obstruct the school work.

[1] Special Report to the Education Committee of the Birmingham Town Council, October, 1911.

And we must think of the facts here presented as indices of the physical deficiency, disease and weakness that are so universal as to pass unnoticed.

Insufficient Nutrition.

Investigations made in other localities have shown that large numbers of children come to school suffering from inadequate nourishment. Adapting Mr. Rowntree's standards to Birmingham, we are forced to believe that quite a half of the homes in the city are either below "the Poverty Line" or only just above it.[1] None of these homes can afford anything like an ample and wholesome diet for the children; and the ignorance of the mother leads in most cases to the wasteful expenditure of what income she has. It is probably a conservative estimate that one-half of all the children attending the Elementary Schools are not receiving sufficient or proper nutriment for their needs as scholars.

The authorities attempt to mitigate this evil by a limited supply of Free Breakfasts, but this provision is neither generous nor general enough to meet the need. In consequence the teacher finds another great limitation forced upon his efforts.[2]

Employment out of School Hours.

The final handicap to the work of the school, again arising from home conditions, lies in the employment of children out of school. There is practically no half-time system in Birmingham, but there is, especially in

[1] This point is developed in Chap. VIII., p. 170.

[2] Accompanying insufficient nutrition should be noted inadequacy of comfortable and wholesome clothing, especially footwear. While boys come to school, as great numbers of them do, in the ruins of boots not made for their own feet, it is absurd and cruel to attempt their physical training through drill and organised games.

the poorer central areas of the city, a great deal of child labour. No official statistics as yet exist to indicate the extent of this evil, but from inquiries among teachers and others, I gather that a very large proportion of children, especially in the "poor" schools, are so employed. Were this employment only for an hour or two, and of a healthy kind (as it often is in rural districts), it would not be an evil worth consideration. But innumerable inquiries—governmental, municipal and voluntary—have shown that in town at least this employment constitutes a serious drawback to the progress of the child. In Birmingham it is mainly of two kinds: work in or for a shop, and street-trading. If a boy merely delivers milk or papers, the occupation itself will not work him any great injury. But many employments connected with shops (the oft-cited case of the barber's boy at once comes to mind) are in a high degree injurious to body and character.

The Committee appointed by the Bishop of Birmingham to inquire into street-trading in this city came to a unanimous agreement that street-trading was not only injurious to physique, but "has a demoralising effect on the boys."[1] The Chief Constable of Birmingham stated that of 550 boys under 16 engaged in street selling in the town in July, 1901, no fewer than 419 had been prosecuted for various offences during the previous six months.[2]

But the gravamen of the indictment of these occupations lies in their interference with the work of the school. One of His Majesty's Inspectors of Elementary Schools writes me that, "Practically every boy who does work out of school hours drops behind in school work." Nature demands that the boy have plenty of rest during these tender years. The child worker, however, has far

[1] Report of the Committee appointed by the Bishop of Birmingham to inquire into Trading by Children, December, 1908, p. 8.

[2] Report by the Inter-Departmental Committee on the Employment of School Children, 1902 (Cd. 895), p. 412.

more work, both mental and bodily, than he is capable of performing; he is subjected to undue physical and nervous strain; and he has insufficient sleep. The results of this over-exertion are seen in heart affection, anæmia, nervous exhaustion, deformities, and, of course, inability to study efficiently. We can hardly blame the teacher who prudently allows such children to take in school the sleep they should have had outside; but we must also make allowance for the serious obstacle this fatigue introduces into the work of the school.

These varied evils are gradually being overcome by the partial transformation of the school into an agency concerning itself with the medical treatment, the feeding, the clothing, and even the housing of the children. At present, however, the expenditure upon education is quite inadequate to deal with these evils in any thorough-going fashion.

Many of the older schools, moreover, are wretchedly equipped for their purpose. In every case classes are too large, close on fifty being the average size, and the teachers, over-burdened though they are with their manifold duties, are paid salaries so grossly inadequate as to make one surprised at the high quality of their work.

Single-handed against this sea of troubles the school is almost unceasingly busy. For six hours of every day for five days of every week, and for forty-six weeks of every year, the school is moulding the personality of the child during twelve of the most pregnant years of his growth. Take away this great influence from the lives of the children of this country, and we should be manufacturing a race of hooligans who would make our existing civilisation an impossibility. As it is, the school takes this often unpromising material, rescues it from a hundred sinister influences, and, imperfectly, if you will, yet steadily and forcefully, shapes it from ignorance to knowledge, from uncouthness to gentility, and even from

viciousness to idealism. The school is a constructive influence in the lives of the children of this country, which even to-day, despite all its unrealised possibilities, works the most marked transformations in the children given to its charge.

By reason of the work which the school has accomplished, boys are turned out well-mannered, obedient, industrious, and for boys of fourteen—intelligent. Even their physical health has benefited greatly by the attention which the school is now beginning to pay to it. The boy has learnt to do reading, writing and arithmetic; the fundamental accomplishments which we all need every day of our lives. Literature, history and geography have opened his eyes to some of the broader aspects of life and social relationships. His smattering of elementary science has brought him into contact with the world of Nature, and assisted him to appreciate the great laws upon which the universe is built, and to feel how men establish their power through understanding and utilising Nature's processes. Singing, drawing, modelling, etc., have helped him to form his standards of value as to what is beautiful and what is ugly. And handicraft, besides initiating him into many typical aspects of life, showing him how man supplies his needs by adapting materials to his service, also serves the utilitarian purpose of fitting the boy for his career. His religious instruction serves to bring him into relation with his Spiritual Environment, which is not the least of his needs.

The training which the school gives is in fact quite sufficient, so far as it extends, to enable the great majority of boys to become good workers and capable citizens. Mr. Paterson even goes so far as to say the " The Seventh Standard are as good-looking and as promising a set of boys as are to be found anywhere in the country." [1]

[1] A. Paterson, " Across the Bridges," p. 79. Of course the boys who reach the top Standards are those that suffer least from demoralising influences outside school.

Every healthy boy, well up in the school, could, if he were properly assisted, become in time an efficient skilled workman. And the boys of the lower Standards are more than equipped in character and intelligence to perform efficiently the operations demanded of the low-skilled.

No one doubts that the potentiality of the Public Elementary School is still to a large extent undeveloped. Changes are needed both in the curriculum and in the manner of teaching. But it is not on these defects in our educational system that stress requires to be laid. It is, in fact, questionable if these changes are worth making so long as the present deterioration during adolescence is allowed to progress unchecked.

The Manufacture of Inefficiency is due, it would seem, not to the errors of schooling, but to the abrupt termination of the education at the age of 14. This is, I believe, the clue to the whole problem of Boy Life and Labour.

We have long been told in the official Introduction to the Elementary School Code that "The purpose of the Public Elementary School is . . . to make the best use of the school years available in assisting boys and girls, according to their different needs, to fit themselves practically as well as intelligently for the work of life." [1] In other words, to adopt phraseology consistent with the developing theory of education, the work of the school is to lead the child into fruitful relations with his environment. This environment will consist in the main of three factors—Work, Home and Society; and the "work of life" will consist in duties connected with each of them. The boy will in time be required to discharge the functions of head of a household, worker and citizen. It is for these ends that education must train the child.

[1] Board of Education Code of Regulations for Public Elementary Schools, opening paragraph of Introduction.

Is it not obvious that such a task cannot be discharged by the Elementary School, losing hold of the boy at 14, several years before he will take up any of the duties included in "the work of life"? To attempt such a feat is ludicrous, because Nature has not provided in the child's personality the possibility of that education for adult life which should take place during adolescence. It does not matter how perfect we make our Elementary Schools, they cannot educate beyond what the stages of growth up to 14 make possible. To attempt to make a man of the school child is very much like trying to teach a tadpole the habits of a frog. The good of education is to fit the pupil for the most effective and harmonious relations with his adult environment, just as the goal of development of a tadpole is to be a frog. But in each case the only line of advance is to provide as generously as possible for adjustment relevant to the stage of growth. To expect of the Elementary School that it should train the boy to be citizen and artisan, father and husband, is to ask for achievements Nature herself has ruled out of order. Elementary education is a failure only in the sense that it terminates just at the very moment when the boy urgently requires further training. The school curriculum requires no great attention so far as subject-matter is concerned, whatever changes may be required in the mode of instruction. It provides the boy with materials for further education. Little more than this can be done before the age of 13 or 14. The fault is that the boy is given nothing except these materials for further education, and that at 14 he emerges into a world which offers little possibility for developing the capacities he has acquired. How the habits laboriously wrought into his personality by the school are undone subsequently will be illustrated in the following chapters.

We must think of the boy of 14 as standing at the

centre of a circle, from which shoot radii towards the circumference, representing the adult environment. All of these radii are in the right direction, and if they were prolonged by continued education they would finally bury themselves in the circumference. As it is, they fall short; the boy is subjected to social and industrial conditions that speedily destroy the standards of value which the school has created; the radii atrophy, and adequate relations between the boy and his environment are not established. The period of adolescence, during which the superstructure should be reared upon the foundation provided by the Elementary School, is devoted to commercial profit instead of training.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BOY AFTER SCHOOL—ADOLESCENCE.[1]

To understand the problem of Boy Life and Labour it seems essential to consider first what psychologists call "Adolescence." This is a conclusion that gathers force through every fresh study that is made of the subject, and to the present writer it seems quite impossible to get a clue to the boy's life and needs except by this method of treatment. The boy's behaviour, in face of social and industrial conditions, is consequent upon his natural characteristics at this stage of life. Upon a child or upon a man, the same environment would act in a totally different fashion; and unless we have in mind a clear picture of the boy during this period, growing and developing in various significant ways, we cannot appreciate the force of the influences brought to bear upon him. And it is no less certain, that if remedies for the evils connected with this problem are to be designed, they can only be effective if they are based upon this same consideration of the boy's personality.

It is a fact patent to all who are intimate with children, that the child up to the age of about 12 is a far more

[1] The period of adolescence is usually reckoned to date from the dawn of puberty (at about fourteen with boys in northern climates) to about twenty-four—that is, from the close of childhood to the beginning of manhood. This chapter is concerned only with *early Adolescence*, covering the first half of the period and roughly corresponding with the age limits of the investigation. It need scarcely be said that the material for this chapter has been derived in the main from Professor G. Stanley Hall's elaborate treatise on Adolescence, to which frequent references have been made.

effective, stable, self-sufficing creature than he is in the subsequent years of adolescence.[1] It is suggested by Dr. Stanley Hall that the child in the earlier period reproduces the characteristics of a very remote and long protracted stage of race development, while adolescence represents the subsequent march of humanity upward from savagery to civilisation. The application of the evolutionary theory of Recapitulation to the problems of psychology is full of promise. It gives a clue to many of the mysteries connected with pre-adult development and it is coming to be basic in educational science. The child is efficiently organised on a simple plan, and in this he is reproducing again, as an individual, a remote period, when mankind had few needs and correspondingly limited but sufficient powers to satisfy them. Adolescence represents higher and newer qualities achieved by the race. The Life-force breaking free from the limitations of this savage period slowly evolved civilised man, with powers of reason and skill and conscience far above those of his barely human forbears. And the time afforded the individual to "catch up," as it were, to the extension of capacity in the race, was correspondingly lengthened. For the black to this day, development practically ceases at puberty, because during that time Nature can fit him for his limited world. Up to that age black children are as educable as white.[2] But after puberty, whereas the black child's mental growth is practically complete, the white child develops all his most characteristic powers. From primitive to civilised life is a long step. Nature has provided the period of adolescence as a sort of protracted childhood, during which the individual may be fitted for correspondence with the complex environment of civilisation.

Hence we see developing during adolescence, reason, conscience, idealism, love, and, in fact, all the most

[1] Stanley Hall, "Adolescence," Vol. I. Preface, pp. ix–x.
[2] Dr. J. W. Slaughter, "The Adolescent," p. 10.

"civilised" attributes of human nature. The limited harmony of the earlier period is broken up, and the youth is launched on the difficult experiment of fitting himself for a far more varied life than his childhood powers would permit. Hence come the instability, the "growing pains,"—both physical and mental,—and the doubts and inconsistencies and difficulties, of this later stage of growth. It is man being born again. "It may be regarded as a new storey erected by the race upon those already existing," [1] and kindly Nature, aware of the hazards of the period, lavishes upon the adolescent a vitality and exuberance that carry him most enviably through storm after storm.

It is as if Nature said to us:—"From savagery you have emerged to civilisation. The savage needed little more than brute strength and animal passion to accomplish all that I required of him. But to-day you have a highly organised state of society in which all men must play their rôle. You have a complex industrial, political and social life, needing special qualities in those who would take part in it. You have built up your Sciences and your Arts, you have even fashioned yourselves a God. The few years of childhood are not sufficient for man to learn about all these things. You must take longer. I provide the time of youth during which each individual may become a citizen of this great city you have raised. I give to the youth every quality that he needs—power to think, power to act, power to love, power to aspire, in order that he may become husband and father, worker and citizen. This is the meaning and purpose of Adolescence."

On the other hand, we must notice that it is just because of the relative instability and because of the quasi-experimental nature of this period of growth, that it is so hazardous. Nature opens youth out to the world at 14 If the influences then brought to bear are such as will supplement natural unfoldment, all will be well.

[1] Dr. J. W. Slaughter, "The Adolescent," p. 10.

But if from 14 the youth is exposed to an environment prejudicial to growth, the resultant harm will be far greater than it could have been in the case of either an undeveloped child or a fully developed man. Nature increases the boy's lung capacity, but she does not determine the percentage of impurity in the air he will breathe. She gives him a love of reading, but she does not write "Imprimatur" on his books. She develops his powers of learning, but she does not build schools. If the right circumstances are not provided for the developing adolescent powers, we have perversion such as would give any savage the right to despise our "civilised life." [1] That this prostitution of the powers of youth is a feature of our present civilisation it is the purpose of the present study to show. It is perhaps the most tragic fact of our social life. Nature has bestowed on almost all youths, gifts sufficient to enable them to become capable, industrious and happy citizens. But society, by making no provision for the exercise of these gifts, and abandoning youth to the cruel circumstances of town-life, is manufacturing year after year a considerable population of inferior human beings.

We shall see this more clearly if we consider in a little more detail the characteristics of this period of growth.

Physical Development.

In the first place we note, at the outset, that adolescence brings with it a period of rapid physical growth. From about 13 to about 18, there is each year a great increase in height, weight and strength, which are the most reliable indices of the energy of growth. After 18 the physical growth curve tends to a level. Corresponding

[1] "Our slums are putrefying sores whose denizens anthropologists believe lower in the moral and intellectual scale than any known race of savages." Stanley Hall, "Adolescence," Vol. I. Preface, p. xvii.

with the growth in stature, there come marked developments in the bony framework of the body, in the skull, in the muscular and nervous systems, in the heart and lungs, and in the brain fibres. These changes are not uniformly progressive and neatly adapted to one another. Growth takes place now here, now there; it is as if Nature found difficulty in making harmonious co-ordination. There seems to be something like a struggle for existence between the various members of the body, and hence the awkwardness and "growing pains" so characteristic of this phase.

Adolescence is, in fact, a peculiarly dangerous period for physical growth. The evolution of the sex organs, the difficulty of establishing harmonious co-ordination between all the various parts of the body, each growing according to its own law, and the special liability of youth to digestive troubles,[1] make it a period in which the boy "runs the gauntlet" through disease and danger. The youth is still exposed to the diseases of childhood, and at the same time becomes liable to almost all adult disorders. Stanley Hall states that "Troubles that seem minor now, may become grave later, and it is probable that this is the sprouting garden of many more chronic and hereditary troubles that become fatal later than is recognised, so that the germs of death are now taking root like tares among the forces of the budding vernal life; all this makes adolescence a process of assay and ordeal for the alloy of morbid disposition."[2] When we realise that the development of mind and character are very largely conditioned by the growth of the body, we see what a grave need there is at this time for assisting

[1] Stanley Hall, "Adolescence," Vol. I. p. 250:—"Very prominent among the physiological disturbances of this age are those of indigestion and disorders of the alimentary canal, and especially of the stomach." And page 252:—"Almost all returns to our food questionnaires . . . show that the appetite, which, if natural, is like a compass pointing to the true pole of our somatic needs, is often gravely disturbed at this period."

[2] *Ibid.*, Vol. I. p. 261.

youth in its physical unfoldment. Good and sufficient food, plenty of sleep and recreation, fresh air and boisterous exercise and a wholesome environment are demanded more imperatively at this stage than in the preceding or succeeding period. It is because these are denied to youth by civilisation that it can be said:—"The momentum of heredity often seems insufficient to enable the child to achieve this great revolution and come to complete maturity, so that every step of the upward way is strewn with the wreckage of body, mind, and morals." [1]

Sexual Development.

The most patent of all the physical developments of this period is the dawn of puberty, which is practically the coming of age of the sex organs. So important is this stupendous fact that it serves as the determinant of the beginning of the period of adolescence.[2] We need scarcely urge the supremacy of the sex-instinct in controlling human activities. Individual happiness depends on successful marriage more than on any other single fact. Society depends upon the goodness of the households which are its units, and sex-love is the creative force that calls homes and families into being. And finally, Nature's fundamental purpose of carrying on the race is achieved solely through the play of the sex-instinct.

While it is true that this sex-instinct discovers itself in both infantile love and child love, it is only at puberty that it begins to play a prominent part in determining the activities of the individual. From that time forward it grows more and more predominant; it takes posses-

[1] Stanley Hall, "Adolescence," Vol. I. Preface, p. xiv.

[2] *Ibid.*, Vol. I. p. 418:—"The chief physical fact of male puberty, about which all the other changes centre, is that now true spermatozoids are formed. . . . Every other physical process and every act of life may be regarded as but the wriggle of flagella to bring these elements to their highest maturity before and after their union with ova, to effect that union under the most favourable terms, etc."

sion of reach after reach of body and soul; and to it, if need be, both the hunger for food and the thirst for God will be subordinated. It is true that love proper scarcely develops till later adolescence, but during the earlier period with which we are more especially concerned love is already a powerful stimulus. In very many cases the love-instinct finds its expression in a succession of youthful love-affairs of which we see manifestations in the boy's sudden conversion to cleanliness, his impulse to "show off," etc.[1] But even where the instinct is insufficiently developed to find definite expression, we must remember that under the surface it is ripening to maturity. And when it becomes an emphatic factor in the young man's life, its character will be dependent upon the food given it during early adolescence. The boy's attitude towards the sex-instinct is mainly determined by the mental associations formed during these years. And in unseen ways this sex-instinct is powerfully contributing to the awakening of the intellect,[2] to the unfoldment of character, and even to the ripening of the soul.[3] It is scarcely too much to say with Dr. Slaughter, in his study of the Adolescent, that "all the characteristics appearing during adolescence are, directly or indirectly, its products." [4]

To the boy himself this development goes on as something altogether beyond his comprehension. It comes; and he does not understand how or why. As a rule, especially with the class of boys considered in this study, he receives no instruction or explanation of any satisfactory kind. He is ignorant, and he is aided by neither Church nor school nor parent. He shrinks from asking questions of those who could help him. Mean-

[1] Stanley Hall, "Adolescence," Vol. II. p. iii.

[2] *Ibid.*, Vol. II. p. 108:—"The development of the sex-function is normally, perhaps, the greatest of all stimuli to mental growth."

[3] *Ibid.*, Vol. II. p. 127:—"Psychologically, religion and love rise and degenerate together."

[4] J. W. Slaughter, "The Adolescent," p. 41.

while the very fact of the physical sex-organs being so much in consciousness helps to arouse an unhealthy curiosity. It is well attested that "early adolescent years are sensitive to all matters pertaining to sex." [1] And there is a thirst to understand what these strange, wonderful phenomena signify. We must remember, further, that the boy is lacking in reason and self-control. This new instinct offers temptations to vice that are withstood only with difficulty even under the most salutary conditions. We shall see in the following chapter what are the conditions in which the boy learns the mysteries of the most delicate and wonderful of Nature's secrets. It is sufficient here to note that the development of the sex-function is attended with the greatest risks to the health and character of the boy, risks so great that no one could exaggerate them. In the words of the most authoritative of the investigators of this problem: "The young man is fighting the hottest battle of his life with the Devil." [2]

The Development of the Senses, the Emotions and the Imagination.

The far-reaching developments of the sex-instinct during adolescence are accompanied by other momentous changes. It has been suggested that this period of growth recapitulates the initiation of the indefinitely remote savage-man into the mysteries of civilisation. It is therefore the period when we should expect all the more characteristically human and civilised qualities to be born. Early adolescence is, in fact, "the infancy of man's higher nature." [3] It is the period in which Nature pours into him her highest energies. The youth during this period is a little child as regards all the higher

[1] Stanley Hall, "Adolescence," Vol. II. p. 437.
[2] *Ibid.*, Vol. II. p. 458.
[3] *Ibid.*, Vol. II. p. 71.

relationships into which he is called upon to enter. He is a kind of apprentice to civilisation. This point of view is of the greatest assistance to us in understanding the nature of this stage of the youth.

At puberty the stable relationships existing in the child's small personality are broken up with a view to higher co-ordinations. Growth impulses assert themselves in all directions, but for a long time they are all ill-controlled and inco-ordinated.

The child breaks away from the old anchorage without finding a new one for many years. A new storey is being added to the old building, but the growing youth does not comprehend or direct the operations. And just as physical infancy is the most critical period of physical life, and that in which mortality is highest, so this period of psychical infancy is most hazardous for the higher life and one in which under existing conditions the mortality is appalling. Nature seems to take the risk in both cases, and to leave it to us to supplement her processes.

We have already seen that the sex-instinct grows and ramifies during this period, without for a long time being understood or controlled by the individual, subjecting him to dangers that are too generally known to need further comment. In the same way the whole sense-life of the child is intensified to a climax without his yet having developed sufficient power to cope with the incoming sensations. "Adolescent years mark the golden age of sense, which is so prone to become sensual if uncontrolled. Then the soul exposes, as it were, most surface to the external world. The eye gate and the ear gate especially are open their widest, and not only that, but the feeling, tone, and the general sense-feeling, so largely independent of perception, are also at their best, so that the possibilities of knowing our world and acquiring experience on the one hand and of lapsing to a life of indulgence, are now most developed." [1]

[1] Stanley Hall, "Adolescence," Vol. II. p. 37.

Largely conditioned by this opening out of the senses, we find that the period of youth is essentially the age of the emotions. Every ingoing nerve-fibre pours into the soul rich and glowing sensations, which sink in deeper at this period than at any other time. Nature makes a new and distinctively emotional appeal; the youth craves for adventure and excitement, and will strain every nerve to get it; Plato called it the time of spiritual intoxication; religion itself during early adolescence is in the main a matter of feeling rather than of reason. And the sex-feeling is responsible for emotions that seem to threaten the very integrity of the soul. All this renders the youth exceptionally unstable and vacillating—as is usual with natures in which the emotions are not subordinate to reason. And these emotions are so urgent that somehow or other they will have satisfaction, illegitimately, if not in natural fashion.[1]

The emotionalism of this period colours, and to a great extent conditions, the whole of the inner conscious life. It is the imagination rather than the intellect of youth that is predominant. It is adventure in real life and in play and in literature that makes the most fundamental appeal to the youthful mind. The youth is endlessly projecting himself into romance. He lives in a world of fancy. His imagination not only spins for him impossible adventures (of which he is always the hero), but it feeds his ambition, gives him his intense hero-worship, and stirs him to action. It is especially in the creation of ideals for the youth that the imagination is so important. The child acts in relation to its immediate surroundings without casting a thought to the future. But the youth lives in the future; he is immensely interested in adult occupations; he apes his elders; he is always planning out his after-life, and dreaming of what he will be and do. He is drawn

[1] Stanley Hall, "Adolescence," Vol. II. p. 74.

forward by a vision which he sees before him. This is Nature's way of leading him to the higher life.

Under the magical influence of the imagination, the mental development of the youth will proceed apace, provided it is given proper scope. It is the great time of the creative instinct, "The age when all become geniuses for a season." [1] Art, science and literature take on a new meaning. The boy attempts to draw and write verses and act, until the poet in him is done to death by the ridicule of his stupid elders.

His thirst for knowledge is marked, and he usually reads omnivorously. He becomes curious about life, and begins to question and explore in every direction. He commences also to reason and to become sceptical about religion; but this development is a feature of later rather than of earlier adolescence. We see again Nature offering *potentiality* without stint, but leaving it to us human beings to decide whether it is developed or aborted.

We must visualise the youth through this phase of growth as not only ignorant, but also somewhat overwhelmed by the changes that he finds taking place. He is acutely aware of new sensations; he experiences a world of wonderful emotions; his whole attitude towards life undergoes the most remarkable transformation. But these developments proceed despite himself, and in early adolescence there is no comprehension or control of the processes. Nature seems to loosen all the bonds of the child's personality, and at the same time to open it up far more intimately to the world around. Early adolescence is thus a peculiarly dangerous period of development. We have already noted its critical nature in the physical life. In the nervous and mental life it is no less perilous, and we are brought face to face with a host of nervous and mental disorders that are the fruit of the risk Nature takes. "Psychoses and neuroses

[1] Stanley Hall, "Adolescence," Vol. I. p. 187.

abound in early adolescent years more than at any other period of life," says Stanley Hall in his comprehensive chapter on the Diseases of Youth. Again, he speaks of the "profound effect of adolescence in producing disturbances of the nervous system and of the mind." It would seem as if life were almost too much for the youth. A myriad problems press in upon consciousness. Sensations are intense. Self-control is not established. Reason is not yet well-developed. And so we find that adolescence is all too often responsible for hysteria,[1] suicide,[2] crime,[3] and insanity.[4] The period seems to have a special tendency to every psychic disease.[5] Again we see the overwhelming necessity for a wholesome environment, in order to make the path of the youth as safe as possible.

The Imperfect Development of Reason and Will.

Meanwhile, though Nature seems to be taking enormous risks, she is not unaware of the needs of the adolescent. From the moment when she opens out to him the greater world, she begins to develop in him the powers of reason and will that will enable him to comprehend and conquer it. Before the birth of puberty every sense stimulus tends strongly to produce immediate reflex action; behaviour is almost mechanical and automatic, in response to circumstances, as it is with animals. But one of the most significant of all the features that mark adolescence is the tendency of sense stimuli to be delayed and reassociated through the agency of the cerebral centres. Suspense of action, deliberation, reflection, take the place of immediate response to external stimulus. This is called "long-circuiting,"—a suggestive phrase,

[1] Pierre Janet, "The Mental State of Hystericals," p. 526.
[2] Stanley Hall, "Adolescence," Vol. I. pp. 374–385.
[3] *Ibid.*, Vol. I. p. 293 et seq.
[4] *Ibid.*, Vol. I. Chap. V. [5] *Ibid.*, Vol. I. p. 310.

descriptive of the roundabout method by which impulses find their way through the higher centres before emerging into acts. In these higher centres go on those processes of co-ordination which we have seen to be so vitally necessary to the adolescent development. All the time that Nature is adding to the experience of youth she is strengthening his sovereign powers of Reason and Will, so that at manhood he may become the absolute master of his own body and soul. But this is a development which goes on only by slow stages, and we find that "psychic maturity" is only reached after the teens are left behind. During the early period of adolescence, which is the period with which we are more especially concerned, Reason and Will are not highly developed, whereas sense impressions and emotions are flooding the consciousness.[1] It is this that enables us to see the urgency of protecting the youth during those early years, when his self-control is at the lowest point.[2]

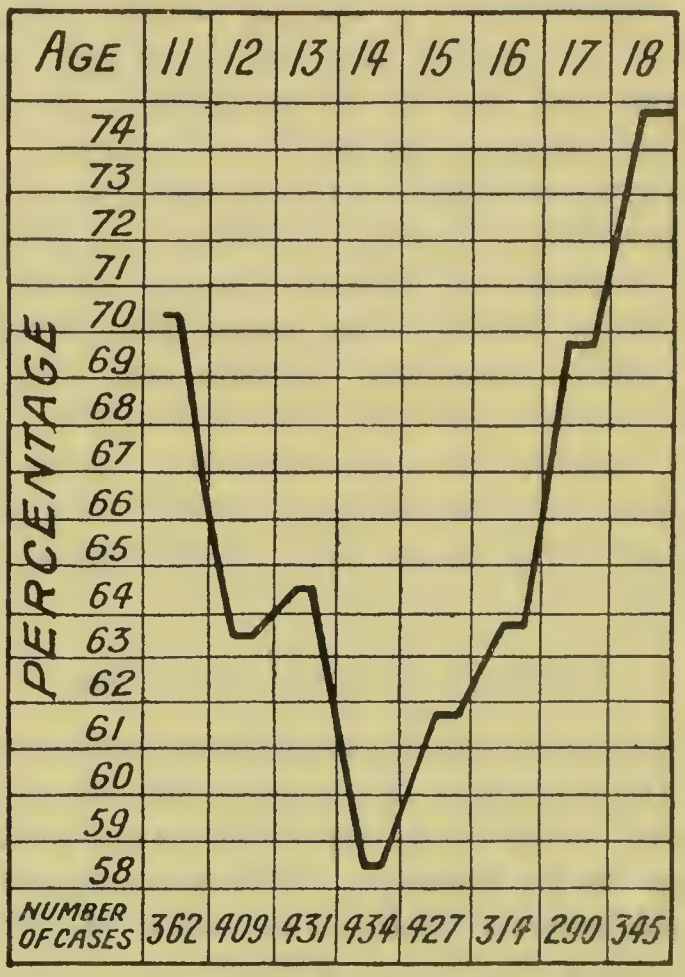
Liability to Vice and Crime.

These facts concerning adolescence will serve to explain, in the first place, the peculiar liability of youth to "go wrong" under conditions that do not provide suitable scope for its impulses. It is too well attested to need a reference that this is the period at which most

[1] Stanley Hall, "Adolescence," Vol. I. p. 163 :—"Before, the aim was to wake all parts to function; now, it is to connect them. . . . It is in the variety and delicacy of these combinations . . . that man rises farthest above the higher animals, and of all these powers later adolescence is the golden age."

[2] It appears that the liability to vice is greatest at just the time when the scholar leaves the Elementary School. Appended is a curve drawn by M. Marro ("La Puberté," Tafala, Graf I. p. 52) which brings out this point most effectively. It is constructed on the basis of an examination of the conduct of 362 boys in educational institutions in Italy, between the ages of 11 and 18. Puberty comes a little earlier in southern climates, so that the results are not quite comparable for this country; but the general outline of the curve would be almost the same.

commitments occur, and when most criminal careers commence. The emotions are hot; the spirit of adventure strong; the chafing of the expanding inner life against authority and restriction is never so galling; self-control is not yet established. The "gang spirit,"



"The "Number of Cases" refers to the number of boys investigated in each year of age.

The "Percentage" refers to the number of boys at each age who were estimated as "good" in conduct.

organising youths into bands, supplies a courage and a vanity that the individual boy would not develop alone. If circumstances do not provide for the healthy expression of the youthful nature, it is forced into unnatural, vicious and criminal channels. Vice and crime, leaving lifelong effects, are born during adolescence.

Susceptibility to Religious and Educational Influence.

And for precisely the same fundamental reasons, this period, which is most liable to vice, is most susceptible to virtue. The qualities which, perverted, produce crime, are the very ones which, cultivated, produce regeneration. This period is the golden age of morality and religion. It is the time provided by Nature for the youth to grow towards the highest and best in life. It is the time of idealism, of splendid aspiration, and of boundless self-sacrifice. During this period the bulk of religious conversions take place. There is an awakening to the claims of a higher life. It is the dawning of the moral instinct, the arrival at man's estate. At no other period have religion and education such an opportunity. The youth craves for moral grandeur, and if he is ever to be made a noble human being, it is now.

The Sovereignty of the Environment during early Adolescence.

We see youth, therefore, especially in the years following schooldays, as peculiarly susceptible to the influences of his environment. His awakened senses drink in impressions from everything with which he comes into contact, and these impressions plough their furrows deep in the texture of his consciousness. His knowledge is too limited and his reason too undeveloped for him to grasp or master his experiences; and he is for some years exceedingly impressionable and plastic to the pressure of external forces. Meanwhile the various changes that are going on in his body and soul force a thousand questions and desires up into consciousness, and lead him to seek altogether new relations with life. He is athirst for experience and knowledge. He will take whatever he can find. It almost seems as if he will become whatever his circumstances make him. In the years of early adolescence environment is sovereign.

CHAPTER VII.

SOCIAL INFLUENCES.

THE purpose of this investigation is to discover why large numbers of boys graduating into industrial life graduate *pari passu* into inefficiency, and even unemployableness. It has been pointed out that the fault cannot be laid at the door of the school; because no matter how perfect the school becomes, it cannot educate childhood for needs and dangers that only arise with adolescence. Again, the fault is not Nature's. It is true, indeed, that Nature makes the boy between 14 and 18 extraordinarily plastic to the circumstances in which he lives. But it is human society, and not Nature, that determines what those conditions shall be. We have to devote ourselves, therefore, to an examination of the social and industrial environment through which the adolescent is condemned to pass. As we do so, we shall discover why it is that the bright, promising school-lad becomes the dull, incapable adult.

We shall first, in this chapter, consider the social influences which play upon the boy. He leaves school at a most fundamental moment in his life, second only in importance to that of his physical birth. It is, indeed, the moment of his second-birth into all the higher possibilities of human nature. It is the time when the dawn of puberty marks the tyranny of the sex-instinct. It is a time of rapid, intense and difficult growth in all directions. From school, the boy carries out into the world character and knowledge, valuable enough, but hopelessly inadequate to enable him to understand or grapple with the new

changes that Nature begins to work in him. If he comes from a home where his parents can help him, goes into better-class work, and spends his spare time in contact with superior influences, he will grow up naturally into a thriving and capable adult. But there is reason to believe that not more than one-third of the boys leaving school can be placed in this category.[1] The remainder find their unresisting personalities exposed in varying degrees to an environment in many respects unsatisfactory or degrading: and, just as naturally, they are shaped into the mould of inefficiency. And while it is true that there is no harsh inevitability about these processes; and that some "superior" boys will lapse, while other boys will surprise the teachers who wagged their heads over them; yet the general result seems to be as certain as the fact that if an infant is unduly exposed and neglected, it will suffer and die.

Descriptions of Boy Life and Labour by the Boys Themselves.

As one means of discovering how working-class boys spend their time, I persuaded a number of them to keep diaries for a week or more. These diaries illustrate the life of a boy of about 17, but they would need little alteration to represent the boy of 15. The main difficulty in getting such records accurate, is that the boy will be evasive concerning his vices and even his pleasures; this makes it well-nigh impossible to get diaries from most of the boys whom we placed in Class III. One record was procured from the boy called C. W.,[2] but it is so shockingly written and so obviously Bowdlerised as to be worthless. Another record was obtained from the boy H. F.,[3] who fell into Class III. only on account of physical weakness; this is in part reproduced, but is not, of course, typical of boys of this class.

[1] See Introduction. [2] P. 56. [3] P. 60.

THE FIRST DIARY IS THAT OF H. V., ONE OF THE BOYS OF CLASS I., WHO IS NOW ENGAGED IN LEARNING A TRADE.

SUNDAY.—Got up at 8.30, had breakfast at 8.45. In the morning I went up to my friends house and did some reading.

In the afternoon went back up to my friends house again and had a cup of tea. I enjoyed myself listening to the gramerphone. Went home and had tea at 6 o'clock.

Went for a walk in the evening. Supper at 9.30.

MONDAY.—I got up at 7 o'clock. Breakfast at 7.30. Work starts at 9.0. It is about 10 minutes walk from our house to the shop.

I get our workbox out of the wharehouse, then take out our work which we are doing. Had no special work this Morning only to assist my master with a few odd jobs (etc). I work for my master who his a very nice man he teaches me to do my work which I like very nice.

I work next to my master so that I can see what he his doing.

The shop we work in is very large considering its a silversmiths shop. This shop is called The makeing up shop.

I go home to dinner and start back at 1.40 then we have a game at foot ball for 10 minutes with the other lads.

Put some cork in some cuskets and had a read at my book in the afternoon.

We have tea at 4.45 till 5.0.

Finish work at 7.0.

Came home and washed myself cleaned my boots then went up to one of my school mates then we went to the Picture Palace. It was very nice considering the price.

We saw some pictures entitled Twix Ambition and Love. Scenery of the Isle of Man. 3 Three different stages and some more pictures. Spent 3d Entrance Fee, 1d sweets.

Went to bed at 11.15.

TUESDAY.—I got up at 7.10 and had breakfast at 7.30.

In the morning I did some sodering.

,, hamering.

,, cutting.

Came home to dinner.

Got back to the shop 1.45.

Played football.

Afternoon.

" Drawed some silverwire down to a certain thickness and done some more odd jobs etc.

Left work at 7.0 and went to school 7.15.

I hamered my bowl which I am making into shape and drawed some wire down to make it look a bit fancy.

We leave at 9.0 and got home at 9.20.

I cleaned myself ready for the morning.

Then I had supper and went to bed.

WEDNESDAY.—I got up at 7.0 and had breakfast 7.30. Did a few small odd jobs in the morning.

Came home to dinner and went back at 1.40. Had a little game at football till 2.0.

Done a bit of sodering and some more fileing in the afternoon.

Went to school at 7 and done a bit more to my boal. Came out at 9. and went into Hibury Hall and heard the singing and saw the people play the piano.

Came of there at 10.25.

Spent ½*d*. Colection.

½*d*. orange.

Went to bed at 10.45.

THURSDAY.—I got up at 7.15 breakfast at 7.35.

Morning.

Wire drawing for 1½ hr.

Then anealed it.

Filed Handles up for cup mounts and done some soldering (etc).

Came home to dinner then had a game at football.

Filing handles all afternoon.

Went to school till 9 then came straight home.

Supper at 10.0 went to bed at 10.30.

FRIDAY.—I got up at 10 min to 7. Breakfast at 7.20.

Made Rings for Cup Mounts.

And a few other odds jobs.

Came home to dinner. Played football.

In the afternoon did the same as this morning (etc).

Came home and cleaned myself then went up to my friends house for an hour.

SATURDAY.—Got up at 10 to 7 and had breakfast 20 past 7.

Dont do much work of a Sat morning always talking about football (etc). Just a few odd jobs and help to sweep the shop up for Monday morning. And sweep our own bench down and straighten up a bit.

Had dinner at 12.30. Went to a football match with our shop and Cape Hill Mission. I ran the line for them and shouted them up a bit. I came home and had tea at 6. Then went to the pictures. I enjoyed myself nicely thank you and went to bed.

WEEK'S BUDGET.

	s.	d.
Wages	5	0
Taken home . . .	1	0
Pocket-money . . .	1	0
Fares		4
Cigarettes . . .		2
Pictures		6

THE SECOND DIARY IS THAT OF M. R., A BOY IN GROUP A OF CLASS II., WHICH INCLUDED THE BOYS WHO SEEMED FITTED FOR SKILLED WORK BUT HAD SUCCEEDED IN GETTING INTO UNSKILLED.

TUESDAY.—

Morning.

I got up at 6.15 and went to work at 6.50. The shop I work in is in an oblong building four storey high, on a line with the canal. The bottom floar being divided into offices except my shop. I do hinge making and Grinding on Emery wheel.

It requires no intelligence it can be picked up in a few minutes.

Not so hard but very monot.

Dinner time 1 *till* 2.

I have ten minutes walk home, have a wash, twenty minutes to have my dinner, a talk my mother or a tune on the Banjo, till ten minutes to two and then back to work.

I have from 5 till 5.30 for tea.

Evening.

Arrived home at 8.10.

Had a wash, a cup of tea and pancakes. After that I took up some old music and practiced on the banjo for an hour. Supper at 9.30 a cup of cocoa another practice for an hour and then bed.

WEDNESDAY.—

Morning.

I got up at 6 o'clock and went to work at 6.50. Breakfast 9 till 9.30.

I went to see a man in another part of the factory who said he had a vacancy for a boy, I settled with him and was to start the next morning.

Went home at 1.0. Had a wash and my dinner and read the paper till 1.50.

No change in my work. Tea from 5.0 till 5.30.

Evening.

Came home 8. Had a wash, and went to the B'ham Hippodrome. Got in late, the best turnes I thought were a Musical Sketch and a Comedy Singing Quartette.

I said that breakfast time was 9 till 9.30. That is the time allowed at the shop, but I have a cup of tea about 6.30.

THURSDAY.—

Morning.

Started at my new job emery wheel and filing. I am anythink but satisfide with it only its a bit of change.

I am day work, but my wages are much lower.

Went home at 1.0. Wash, and a tune on my banjo till 1.50.

Afternoon work brass fileing.

Evening.

Came home at 6.0. Had a wash, tea at 6.30, practised at the banjo for an hour and a half, and read the Mail.

I may say that the rules of the factory are very easy not near so strict as marjority of factories.

FRIDAY.—

Liked the work much better this morning.

Got home at 1.10, had a wash and my dinner nothing particular happend only talked on some subject till 1.50 and then set out to work which was mostly emery wheeling and drilling Went home at 6.0 p.m. After wash and my tea, I mostly practised on the Banjo and then had a little around the town and then into bed.

SATURDAY.—

Had to work hard this morning to finish a contract ordor.

Had dinner at 1 p.m.

Read the Birmingham Weekly Post till 2.30 then rote to London for a list of Banjo Music, went out to buy a cap and tie, come home and got ready for the night.

After tea I change myself and went a walk around the town untill 8.30 and then went to the Empire.

The top of the bill was George Mozart in his thumb-nail sketches, I think he was very good, as I take great interest in acting. Most of his sketches were different characters on the race course.

The rest of the Bill was very good but I cant remember their names as I see so many Music Halls in the week I get them mixed up.

Had a very enjoyable evening. I go with nobody sometimes I make appointments with some of the boy at the shop, but they generally disappoint me.

I spent 1*d.* on stamp.
Button hole 1*d.*
Cap and tie 1*s.* 6½*d.*
Music Hall 4*d.*
Sweets 3*d.*

SUNDAY.—

I got up at 9.30 and had breakfast at 10 a.m.

After breakfast I got ready for church.

Church commences at 11 a.m. I attend the Oratory in Hagley Road.

After church I went for a walk round Harbourne untill dinner time 2.30 p.m.

After dinner I felt rather tired after my walk so I laid down on the sofa and in ten minutes I was fast asleep.

I woke at 5 p.m. had a wash and my tea and went and had a practise.

Every Sunday night I go to my uncles house, he lives in Aston.

At one time I used to go for Banjo lessons, but now I go for a talk.

He is no tradesman, he works as a packer and fills up his time in singing, he is a Scotch Comedian and has won a big name on the Platform Stage.

He is very seldom in Birmingham he is mostly travelling the Provinces. He was in his early life a gymnast with my father, but he had a fall and was unable to go on any further with it. He joined the 42nd Black Watch and was in the Bore War. I stop at his house till about 11 p.m.

MONDAY.—

I got up at 7.0 had breakfast at half-past. Nothing special happened this morning. Came home at 1.0 had a wash and dinner and a rest until 1.50.

I am getting on better with the filing and like it better.

In the evening I practiced on the Banjo for an hour and then a walk until 10.0 p.m. when I had supper and went to bed.

THE THIRD DIARY IS THAT OF K. L., A BOY IN GROUP B. OF CLASS II., WHICH EMBRACED THE BULK OF THE BOYS INCLUDED IN THIS INVESTIGATION: THOSE GETTING INTO THE UNSKILLED WORK, FOR WHICH THEY APPEARED FITTED.

SATURDAY.—

I got up at 7.25. Put on my boots and had breakfast which consisted of toast and two cups of tea. Went to work at 7.55 which is about a quarter of a mile of couse I walked.

The Factory I work at is a manufacturers of furniture and coppersmiths; they also make wire handles for lard pans. These handles are made from 3.45 and 6 guage wire which arrives at our factory in coils. These coils are first weighted and then lain by the side of the cutter which is a large iron thing.

This machine is worked with a treadle.

First of all I undo the coil and then the wire is pushed through a small hole in the side of the machine to a distance of about 7¾ inches which is stopped by a piece of iron. Then with my foot I push down the treadle cuts the wire which is bent into shape by a woman on a press.

I knocked off at 12.30. I drew my money and then went home had dinner which consisted of bread and beef steak. I then went out into the street came back and payed a shilling club money.

At about 1.30 went with some friends and played Football for about two hours and then went to the match Birmingham *v.* Preston North End. The latter are top of the second division while Birmingham are in the third. At First it was an exciting game first the ball would be up one end of the field and then up the other end.

Bir. got a runaway through A. R. Smith who centered to Hall who missed Play went into mid field for about 15 minutes where Prestons inside right secured the ball and run down the field passed to the centre who dribbled through the goal. Birm. then began to Press but did no good and in the second Half missed several open goals. Preston won by 1.0. In the evening I got ready and then we walked all about the town through the market hall and then we came down Jamacia Row through the Rag Market in which we walked about watching things being sold at about half past nine we came home. When I got home I began to read that book you gave me which is a fine sea story written by G. A. Henty.

SUNDAY.—

Had bread and bacon and two cups of tea for breakfast. Got up at 9.50 got ready and went out. I went for my friends and we went on some waste ground and played football until about 2 oclock went home.

In the afternoon we gathered together and saw some lads who live the other end of our street and asked them if they would play us at football this was agreed and we went on the ground and kicked off we were the winners of that match by a list of 8 goals to 5. After that we went to the coffee house and stayed there for a while and then went home to tea at 6.15.

Went out in the evening for a short time and came back and began to read that book.

MONDAY.—

Got up at 7.5 had two cups of tea and toast for breakfast and went to work at 7.50.

The only thing that was different was that I did not do so much as on any other day. (Wire-cutting.)

At about ten minutes to one I went and washed my hands then I waited till one put on my coat and went home. I got there about five minutes after one when I got home I found my dinner waiting for me after having me dinner I went and played football until 1.50 and then went to work.

There is nothing different to tell. we had lunch at about 4.30 knocked at 6.30. Owing to me having no money I could not go to any amusements so I went out for about an hour and then came back and sat by the fire later I picked up that book and began to read but before I had barely read a dozen Pages I began to feel drowsy so I thought it would be best if I went to bed.

TUESDAY.—

Got up at 7.25 had bacon and bread and two cups of cocoa washed me and went to work at ten minutes to 8 lunch at about 10.10 sit down till 10.30.

Had dinner and after that played at football started to go to work at about ten minutes to two had tea at 4.50 and sat down till about ten minutes after five and began work wire cutting.

Was done at eight o'clock supper at ten minutes after eight. I washed me and then sat down to write this, after I picked up the "Birmingham Daily Mail" and began to read the first thing I read was the southern Party. Captain Scott and Captain Oates who perished after returning from South Pole expedition. It was stated that Scott who was the leader and his band of explorers reached the Pole but it was on their return Journey that they Perished.

WEDNESDAY.—

Got up at 7.30 toast and two cups of tea for breakfast went to work at ten minutes to eight but was there too early and had to wait. lunch at a quarter to ten till ten. After finishing dinner I went out and stood in the street talking to a friend until ten to two and went to work.

Had tea at five o'clock until quarter past five knocked off at eight oclock.

Had supper at ten after eight sat down and writ this after

began to read. I did not go out because I felt tired but went to bed very soon.

THURSDAY.—

Got up at 7.10 had toast and tea for breakfast and went to work at five to eight. lunch about half past ten till quarter to eleven.

Came home to dinner at one after dinner I went back to work which was about half past one. I played football until two oclock.

Had tea at 5.30 until six o'clock knocked off at 8 oclock and had supper at ten minutes after eight.

Washed and writ this then went to bed.

FRIDAY.—

Got up at 7.20 had toast and two cups of tea for breakfast and went to work. lunch at about 10.5 till 10.20. Washed my hands at five minutes to one waited for one oclock then went home. After dinner I went back to work at 1.25 and met a work-mate who was going to town I went with him and then came to work. I done about an hours wire-cutting and then went to clean the factory yard of course it took me about an hour and a half. I then went on with my own work. Had tea at 5.30 until 5.45 after tea I went upstairs and got a lot of tin scrap up and put it in the scrap box. I then fetched some beer for the forman.

Went home at 8 oclock. After supper I had a wash and began to read the Mail. One of the chief things I took interest was a Suffrage incident which occurred in the House of Common's while Mr. Mills was speaking a man in the Strangers gallery shouted " I protest against your brutal treatment to women " the man was seized by private detectives and carried out.

WEEK'S BUDGET.

	s.	*d.*
Wages . . .	10	2
Club money . . .	1	0
Owed		4½
Took home . . .	7	0
Football . . .		6
Fares		3
Coffe House . . .		4
Fruit		4½
Football Sweep . .		4

THE THREE FOLLOWING RECORDS ARE THE MONDAYS OF THE DIARIES OF THREE OTHER BOYS IN CLASS II., GROUP B., WHO ARE TYPICAL OF THE BULK OF BOY-WORKERS (p. 49).

R. J.'s DIARY FOR MONDAY.

Morning. I got up at 7 o'clock and went to work at half past 7. I work at a Brass and Iron castor's, file, flote, and carried the work down.

Dinner Hour. One hour.

In the shop.

In the spare time we sit down and tell joxs.

Afternoon. Nothing different. 10 mints for tea 5 o clock. Knock off at 7 o clocks.

Evening. Went to the pictures. All right.

Supper at 9 o clocks.

K. W.'s DIARY FOR MONDAY.

I got up at 7 am Washed Breakfast and Ready for work at 7·35.

First of All I help to start the Engenes after that I do All little odds and Ends, such as get scrap up sweep up help to do gas fitting and etc. And as for the people I work with I do not care for any of them as they are in a btter position than myself and think they are all my superior.

As for liking it its Just the reverse not because the money inst a nough but its no trade.

I left at 1 o clock arrived home at 1.10. Dinner from 1.15 to 1.35. Arrive back at work at 1.45 from then till 1.55 I was enjoying myself at football.

The only thing different in afternoon work is we work an Hour Shorter. We have tea at Four o.c. till 4.10. I had my tea in the Boiler House.

I left Work at 6 p.m. arrived home 6.15 prompt washed and went to the Club at 7.0 had a couple o games at Billiards. which Lasted an Hour & 20 minutes that left it to be 20 minutes past 8.

After that I sat and watched other Boys Play, with whom I get on very well with after 2 more games had been played it was time to go home as it was 15 minutes to ten.

I spent 2*d* cigarettes.

2*d* Billiards.

1*d* Tea.

1½*d* Cake.

H. J.'s Diary for Monday.

I got up at Six O clock and went to work at Severn O clock. It is about ten minutes walk from were I am now living. We have breakfast at Aight Thirty.

I don't think it is a very nice trade for when I get a man, It is not a very nice job while I'm a lad, It is very very greacy. (At a Rolling Mill.)

I have to wait till about twenty minutes past One, And about the same again to eat my dinner, and take an easy walk back to the place again for two O clock.

I had some copper mettle this afternoon to do, and only a small space of time on brass.

When I came home from work, I had a wash, and then I had my tea, and a read from my present that I had from you Sir, and I then started to write this book.

The Following Extract is the Monday of the Diary of H. F., a Boy placed in Class III. because of his Wretched Physical Condition.

Morning.

Got up at 6.30. Caught the quarter-past 7 tram which get into town at 20 minutes to 8 o'clock. Arrive at 5 to 8. Get our checks off the board and place them in a box where counted by a warehouse man. Having placed my checks in the box I went into the shop and lit the gas ready to start. When my three work-mates came we fell to discussing the different musical hall turns and picture houses till the motor started. My first job was to grind some cast iron work called vacum cleaners. (Diagram given.)

After lunch time I had a small job to do on the bench, filing the fixtures of the frames of mail carts to the right size. (Diagram.)

Dinner-hour. Sat talking and eating till half-past one. When we went into the yard and had a game with the other boys till two o'clock.

Afternoon.

Afternoon is from 2 till 7 with a quarter of an hour tea. After dinner I had to start drilling the casting I ground in the morning. (Diagram.) At 5 o'clock we had tea and talked about music halls. Quarter past 5 the motor started and I went on drilling till 7. Came home on the tram and had another tea. It was too late to go to the pictures or Music hall. I sat down to read till I had my supper at 10 o'clock.

These sketchy records are sufficient to give an idea of the way in which the boy spends his time. The bulk of the waking hours are spent at work, and the boy's short evening is very frequently spent away from his home: more often, in fact, than these diaries, written by some of the best of these boys, would indicate. The main influences that are contributing to shape the boy's mind and character are: his Work; his Home; Church, the Boys' Club and similar agencies; Reading; the Picture Palace; the Music Hall; Street Life and Games. We will consider each in turn, in its relation to the developing personality of the boy.

The Home.

In estimating the contribution which the Home makes to the life of the boy, we may adopt again the classification employed in Chapters III. to V. In the Superior Home, we find influences building up the personality of the boy, just as we found co-operation with the work of the school. The home in view is one where the father is usually a skilled worker earning something above 30*s.* a week; where the mother is a woman with sufficient capacity and money to perform her household duties successfully. The home will often be a little cottage out of the central parts of Birmingham, or at any rate it will have four respectable rooms, one of which will usually be preserved as a drawing-room and contain a pianoforte and other emblems of superiority. There are comfort, brightness, and cleanliness; framed pictures, clean tablecloths, lace curtains; a superfluity of ornaments. The father is a sensible man, and holds decided political opinions. The mother is a capable woman and goes to Church. The family relations are harmonious and cheerful. In such a home the boy finds space and scope. He will willingly spend his evenings there (as his parents expect him to do), reading or playing

games or enjoying some hobby. He picks up religious and political ideas of a definite kind, and will combat for them fiercely with his mates. And from the example and influence of his parents, even though they have little control over him once he begins to earn, he gains much that will stand him in good stead throughout life. This type of home may be, and usually is, invaluable to the boy at this critical period of his life. The father and mother are real friends to the lad, interested in his work and all that he does, and able to advise and help him in his career.

The great majority of the homes, however, from which come the bulk of the boy-workers of Birmingham, are of a poorer type. They are situated in those closely populated quarters which form a kind of black padding around the great, rich, central thoroughfares of the city. I have at my elbow a map, showing the relative death-rates in the wards of the whole of Greater Birmingham. The central parts, by contrast to the outlying and healthier areas, are coloured black: "death-rate, 19 and upwards per 1000." It is in these areas, and those immediately contiguous, that most of these homes lie. And we are informed in the official Report of the Medical Officer of Health, in which the map in question is inserted :—

"There can be no difference of opinion as to the great disadvantages under which people are situated who live in the centre of a manufacturing city like Birmingham, where factories producing smoke, dust, and fumes are everywhere intermingled with dwelling-houses. In these areas there are no gardens or green spaces for the children to play in, with a result that the worst conditions of urbanisation are to be found." [1]

For many weeks I spent my time in tramping through and through these areas, and in visiting the vile dwellings situated in them. I have an impression of endless filth,

[1] Report of the Medical Officer of Health for Birmingham, 1911, p. 70.

unrelieved ugliness, and an atmosphere thick with "ancient and fish-like smells." People live here in conditions that give any person of reasonably refined tastes a feeling of physical nausea. And, as if to mark the triumph of the "brute-god Mammon," it is the factory chimneys, and not the spires of the churches, that fill the heavens.

The homes that are to be found in these parts are of two kinds, which may be called, in contrast to the Superior Home, the Indifferent and the Unsatisfactory Home. The Indifferent Home is the one from which the bulk of the boy-workers come. The dwelling almost always consists of three rooms, and the rent is somewhere about 4*s.* 6*d.*[1] The father is an unskilled worker and earns usually nearer twenty than thirty shillings: just enough, with the increments brought in by the children, to enable the mother to stay at home and look after the house. The father is an ignorant man and sees very little of his son. The mother may be figured as engaged in a ceaseless warfare with all the forces of poverty, dirt, and disease, that never cease to attack her household. "I've always scrat and done for them as best I could," said one of them to me, and this gives an accurate picture of the average woman's life.

In fact, the impression one gets of this type of home is that it is a battleground upon which the Mother is matched against the Demon of Poverty. This is the issue in every poorer working-class home. It is only by unceasing toil that the housewife can keep the home habitable. There is a bare sufficiency of food and clothing, but no margin. The extra shilling or two of the boy working out of school hours is very precious, and the successive entry of one after another of the children into regular wage-earning marks in each case expansion to a

[1] Cf. Report on Cost of Living of the Working Classes (cd. 3864), p. 84 (Housing and Rents in Birmingham).

more comfortable and happy life for the whole household. But through destitution or comfort, the mother is ceaselessly busy; and through all her troubles she preserves a cheerfulness and courage that reprove sharply those of us who grumble at such trivialities as the weather.

Of course, each home has its own individuality. One house will be clean and comfortable on an allowance that produces only dirt and discomfort next door. But, generally speaking, the condition of the home tends to vary with the amount of the income. And, of all these homes, we may say that they contribute little of a positive kind to the life of the boy. The parents are not sufficiently educated, morally or mentally, to influence the boy much; and he sees little of them. Poverty renders the home so small and unattractive that the boy spends in it very little of his spare time.

Mr. Bray, who has studied this point carefully, declares:—"The home is a convenient lodging-place and nothing more." [1] The most charitable view we can have of such homes is that they exercise no positively harmful influence over the boy.

This type of home shades off into the Unsatisfactory Home. The father is a casual worker, or the mother is bread-winner as well as housewife. Income is below poverty-line, and is augmented from charitable or State sources, and sometimes in more sinister ways. What was poverty in the Indifferent Home becomes squalor in this. Industrial and other accidents are perpetually converting homes of a higher type into homes of this character. And such a dwelling has none but injurious consequences on the physique and personality of the boy who is condemned to lodge in it, to say nothing of what he suffers through insufficient nutrition and clothing. We may be thankful that he elects to spend every spare moment abroad.

[1] R. A. Bray in an essay on "The Boy in the Family," in "Studies of Boy Life in our Cities," edited by E. J. Urwick.

With the bulk of the boys we are considering, the Home provides practically nothing for those needs of the adolescent, which we saw in the last chapter to be so imperative. At 14, the boy becomes a full-time wage-earner, and, lest he should take his earnings elsewhere, he must be treated as a person of consequence by his parents. He becomes suddenly independent; and if there was supervision or control before, there will be none henceforward. "The lad goes to bed a boy, he wakes as a man." This sudden emergence into liberty, coupled with the unattractiveness of the home and the lack of character on the part of the parents, makes it easy to see why the boy turns to other sources for the satisfaction of his expanding interests. It is a conclusion which, apparently, all investigators have reached, that the home may be almost left out of account as a positive influence in the life of the boys of this class.[1]

Work.

The boy's Work is considered in detail in the following chapter. It is sufficient to state here that while occupying the bulk of the boy's time, it does not provide scope for the development of the physique nor the expansion of the personality. Long hours of monotonous toil, often under disagreeable conditions, give the boy no outlet for all those imaginative, emotional, adventurous yearnings that are at this period almost irrepressible within him. The consequence is that, when he leaves the workshop of an evening, he feels an abnormal craving for sensation. The boy of the middle classes is provided with a *κάθαρσις* for his youthful instincts in the shape of games and other wholesome interests. The boy-worker, cheated of normal boyish activities, becomes unnaturally sensational and melodramatic. And the fact that he is physically

[1] See R. A. Bray, "Boy Labour and Apprenticeship," pp. 92 to 153—"The Contribution of the Home"; and "Studies of Boy Life in our Great Cities"—"The Boy and the Family."

tired and mentally jaded, makes him the more prone to seek satisfaction in undesirable ways.[1]

We must note, further, that the boy is now independent of home control and free to stay out late at night. He is obsessed with his own importance, eager to " be a man " and show off before his pals ; being no longer a " school-kid," he will take every opportunity of proving it. For the first time in his life, moreover, he is possessed of what is for him a substantial income, to be laid out at his own caprice. It is only by keeping this peculiar condition of the boy in mind that we can understand his reaction upon the various good and bad social influences that are offered him by his environment.

Religious Agencies.

We have noted that early adolescence is the golden age of religion. It is the time when conversion or regeneration naturally takes place ; it is the time when religion can do its finest work. And now let us ponder this authoritative statement : " The fact remains, however, undisputed, that there is no adequate provision for the spiritual needs of the great majority (90 per cent.) of young people between 14 and 17 years of age." [2]

In a volume kindly loaned to me by the Sunday School Union, it is stated :—

" Latterly the facts have been subjected to careful statistical scrutiny, and it is affirmed that 80 per cent. of the scholars are lost to the Church when they reach the ages of 14 or 15." [3]

" Beginning with the more distinctly religious associations, we find among them practical unanimity of opinion. One and all confess sadly that they are unable to keep in touch with the boys after they have gone out to work." [4]

[1] Cf. A. Paterson, " Across the Bridges," p. 110.

[2] Essay on " Religious Influences and the Adolescent," in " Problems of Boy Life," edited by J. H. Whitehouse, M.P., p. 264.

[3] Albert Swift, " The Institute Department," p. 1.

[4] R. A. Bray, " Boy Labour and Apprenticeship," p. 89.

My own inquiries on this point fully confirmed the fact that almost every boy gave up Sunday School and Church when he left the Day School. In his pride of manhood, he "puts away childish things."

Now there is not the slightest doubt that this failure to spiritualise the life of the boy will continue just so long as social and industrial conditions remain what they are. Tire him out at work, starve his inner life all day long, cut short his recreation, render him abnormally desirous of excitement—and no improvement in the methods of religious organisation will be successful in bringing him into the precincts of the Church. Under the present conditions we must accept the melancholy fact that these agencies, which should be the most elevating of all, make no contribution to the life of the average working-boy.

Educational Agencies.

Evening classes share the same fate for precisely the same reasons. No boy who has worked ten hours during the day can be expected to go to classes at night. Indeed, by the time his supper is finished and he has cleaned himself, the hour is usually too late for attendance. Of all the boys whose cases I investigated, scarcely any had ever attended evening classes. There are no published official figures which afford any indication of the number of boys between 14 and 18 who attend Continuation Classes in Birmingham. Sir George Kenrick, however, stated in evidence to the Consultative Committee to the Board of Education :—

> "The number of scholars, therefore, from Birmingham schools who went direct to Evening Classes when they left the Day School was not large—perhaps 1,500 out of 10,000 who leave annually." [1]

It is the official opinion in the city that the relatively

[1] Report of the Consultative Committee, Vol. II. p. 484.

small number who attend are almost entirely boys from the skilled artisan and middle classes. Dr. M. E. Sadler, in his work on "Continuation Schools in England and Elsewhere," stated :—

"The conclusion is that not more than one in five of the children in England and Wales regularly attend the Continuation Schools during the years immediately following the Elementary Day School courses." [1]

Professor Urwick, writing of the Metropolis, asserts :—

"In London, the total number of these [boys attending Continuation Classes] amounts to 57,800, or, roughly, one-tenth of all the boys and girls between the ages of 14 and 20, who have been educated at Elementary Schools. Of the boys of the poorer grades it is safe to say that the proportion is much smaller." [2]

Since Mr. Urwick wrote there has been an actual drop of over 30,000 students attending the Evening Schools, etc., of London.[3] In a table issued by the Consultative Committee in their Report on Attendance at Evening Schools, we find careful estimates of the numbers of persons attending Evening Continuation Classes. The last column gives us the percentages of those *not* attending any sort of Continuation Classes (exclusive of Sunday Schools) :—Between 14 and 15, 64·10 per cent. of boys and girls do not attend; between 15 and 16 the figure rises to 76·73; between 16 and 17, to 81·95; while between 17 and 18, 86·87 per cent. of the population attend no educational courses.[4] Of the small numbers who go to Continuation Classes, it is generally recognised that they are almost all youths belonging to grades of labour above that of the unskilled worker; and it would

[1] Dr. M. E. Sadler, "Continuation Schools in England and Elsewhere," p. 696.

[2] E. J. Urwick, "Studies of Boy Life in our Cities," p. 285.

[3] L.C.C. Report on Eight Years of Technical Education and Continuation Schools, Appendix A.

[4] Board of Education : Report of the Consultative Committee on Attendance, Compulsory or Otherwise, at Continuation Schools, Table C, p. 29, Column 90. Cf. also Vol. I. p. 27.

seem to be established beyond controversy that organised education makes practically no contribution to the life of the average working-boy.[1]

Thus we see that the boy's mind, which is overflowing with eager and momentous questions; and his character, which is being readily moulded by every influence of his life; find no contact with organised Religion or Education after the school-days are finished. Only one solitary agency of an elevating or educational character is even claimed to be an influence in the life of the boy, and that is the Boys' Club.

Boys' Clubs.

Now the Club is the most successful agency for getting hold of the boy, for the simple reason that it provides food palatable to the adolescent appetite. The boy wants sympathy, guidance, knowledge, and religion; but he is not inclined to take them except through media that appeal to his emotional and dramatic nature.

The objects of a Boys' Club have been stated as threefold: "Amusement and physical development," "the advancement of general education," "religious effort."[2] In general, a Club aims at all three. But the tragedy of the Club movement lies in the fact that in so far as it fails to provide amusement it will not attract boys; while in so far as it provides amusement, it is not assisting, except incidentally, the moral and mental unfoldment of

[1] Cf. Report of the Consultative Committee on Attendance at Continuation Schools, Vol. I. p. 67. We ought also to note here that lads of this class rarely keep up any contact with their old school. "Teachers usually admit that they cannot keep in close touch with many of their old scholars, and that it is generally the best and most successful boys whom they see after leaving school and whose careers they are able to follow" (Mr. Cyril Jackson, "Report on Boy Labour," p. 11). There is much to be said for the establishment of Boys' Clubs in connection with every Elementary School. The few already existing in Birmingham are most promising experiments.

[2] C. E. B. Russell and L. Rigby, "Working Lads' Clubs," p. 4.

the boy. Most Clubs make amusements and sports the main concern of their organisation. This is right, because, otherwise, the boy who is tired after his work will not attend. And, of course, the boy picks up valuable habits from association with other lads and with the Club helpers. But it would seem as if, in many Clubs, the positive educational influences were exceedingly small. The Boy Scout Movement, combining physical, mental, and moral training all in one, seems to be an almost perfect escape from this dilemma. This organisation, and those like it, are successful because they are based on sound psychology.[1] "Call these boys 'boys,' which they are, and ask them to sit up in a Sunday class, and no power on earth will make them do it; but put a fivepenny cap on them and call them soldiers, which they are not, and you can order them about till midnight." [2]

But largely because of the boy's abnormal condition after his work, and because of the counter-influence of other attractions, we find that none of these agencies—not even the Boys' Club, laying itself out merely for the boy's amusement—make an appeal to the mass of boys of this class. And the boys who come are precisely those who need the Club least; those, in fact, who come from good homes and would be better if they stayed in them. Mr. Bray says:—"At the present time the Clubs are mainly filled with boys of the highest social class," [3] and he regards them in this case as a "serious menace to family

[1] There are now nearly 200,000 Boy Scouts in Great Britain. Sir Robert Baden-Powell informs me that "The Scouts include boys from every rank of life. We have many troops in connection with Preparatory Schools, and there are many cases of boys in the Public Schools being Scouts. Also we have troops among the very poorest slum boys in London, Manchester, Birmingham, Glasgow, and elsewhere, and boys in every class between these two extremes." Ages vary from 11 to 18, the average being about 15.

[2] Henry Drummond, article in *Good Words*, reprinted by the Boys' Brigade (quoted in "Life of Henry Drummond," p. 454).

[3] R. A. Bray, "The Boy and the Family," in "Studies of Boy Life in Our Great Cities," p. 100.

life."[1] Birmingham offers no exception to this rule. The Street Children's Union was formed for the express purpose of helping the "large class of Birmingham boys and girls whose occupations or bad home conditions cause them to spend most of their lives on the streets." But the Union has *only 400* such boys over the age of 14 in its eight Senior Clubs. It seems to be generally agreed that the numerous other Clubs in Birmingham appeal mainly to boys of higher grades; and the Street Children's Union experiences great difficulty in "preventing a Club from getting respectable." Even supposing —a very generous estimate—that other Clubs get hold of 1100 of the rougher boys, this means only 1500 out of a population "of such boys" estimated at 15,000 by the Street Children's Union in its 1910–1911 Report.[2] Such a percentage was roughly confirmed by the inquiry which I myself made.[3]

Semi-official Agencies.

The Birmingham Care Committee System.

This consideration of these philanthropic agencies forces us to the conclusion reached by Mr. Bray in his

[1] R. A. Bray, "Studies of Boy Life in Our Great Cities," pp. 99 and 100.

[2] Report of the Birmingham Street Children's Union, p. 58. This is in spite of the fact that Birmingham has greatly developed its Club movement, which has been just recently stimulated and centralised by the formation of "The Birmingham Council for Workers amongst Boys" and a "Federation of Boys' Clubs and Leagues." A useful Handbook for Workers was first issued by the Council early in 1913. Enthusiasts in Birmingham claim that about one boy in four is attached to some sort of organisation; even if we admit this claim, it would fully justify the conclusion that the bulk of the poorer boys are outside the Club movement. Probably the actual proportion is nearer one in eight. This is the estimate of Mr. Frederic Keeling ("School Child and Juvenile Worker," April 1913, p. 13). It would be a great boon if the Council would collect exact statistics.

[3] See Chapters II. to IV.

recent work on "Boy Labour and Apprenticeship":— "This brief survey of the contribution of philanthropic enterprise to the apprenticeship of to-day reveals one obvious conclusion: these associations only touch a fringe of the problem and in no way exert any comprehensive measure of control over the lads between the ages of 14 and 18." [1] It is the recognition of this fact that has led to various semi-official experiments in providing for the needs of the adolescent. No town has been more enterprising than Birmingham in this direction; and the various schemes that have been put into operation for assisting the youth of the city are as good as can be devised within existing laws and conditions; they have, moreover, been carried out with considerable capacity and public spirit. The Birmingham scheme of Care Committees corresponds in some respects with the Juvenile Advisory Committees that have been formed in the Metropolis and elsewhere, but it seems to be based on much more satisfactory lines.[2] There were, in October 1912, 54 Care Committees dealing with 110 schools. A few months before each boy or girl leaves school, a form is forwarded by the school teacher to the Local Committee, and children are labelled A (requiring "a good deal of after-care"), B (requiring "some amount of after-care"), and C ("not requiring after-care").[3] It is estimated (from actual returns) that about 23 per cent. are A cases, 37 per cent. B, and 36 per cent. C.[4] This means that 3,050 of the children leaving school each year, 9,150 in three years, "*will need close attention.*"

Now to quote the official statement:—"Close upon 1000 helpers will be required *for these cases alone* in the

[1] R. A. Bray, "Boy Labour and Apprenticeship," p. 92.

[2] The scheme is further considered in Chapter IX.; only its social aspect needs notice at this point.

[3] All these details may be found in the First Annual Report of the Central Care Committee, pp. 8 and 9.

[4] Four per cent. of the returns were unmarked.

course of three years, *even if they undertake the care of ten children each on the average.*" In addition, there are 5000 children leaving school each year, 15,000 in three years, needing " some amount of after-care." And the official dictum rightly is that " It is obvious that they, with the others, will require quite an army of helpers if the work is to be done completely." Now by October 1912, only 1,250 helpers had been secured. We must remember that the best of these helpers are the busiest, and able to give little time to visiting, which means at least an evening for one or two cases. Many members do not do their work systematically or efficiently. But whether they do it badly or well does not matter for the moment. The point is that the present number of helpers (which shows no prospect of substantial increase) will find the number of cases on their hands steadily growing. Even at the present time it is scarcely possible for a voluntary worker to exercise any effective supervision, as he should do over the lives of ten or a dozen boys and girls. In the future his task will be altogether impossible. Help the boy into work the helper may do ; befriend him also to some extent ; but it is absurd to picture him as making any sort of decided contribution to the boy's life. This organisation, and those corresponding with it elsewhere, must fail, both for lack of good voluntary helpers and because they are fighting against other influences, arising from conditions which cannot be eradicated by voluntary effort. The amount of influence which a Care Committee Helper can exercise over the life of a boy—as many of them have told me—is relatively insignificant compared with that of the other influences we have now to consider.

The Picture Palace.

The wearisome work in which the boy is engaged for the bulk of his time renders him peculiarly desirous of excitement in his leisure. His home has no attractions for him. He passes by the Institute, the Free Library, and even the Boys' Club; he will not enter Church or Sunday School on the Sabbath. We have next to consider how he actually spends his spare time. Under what influences are his developing instincts and emotions growing to maturity?

The Picture Palace, we are told, "has become the most universally accepted of modern amusements."[1] It seems to me unquestionable that it is the greatest formative influence at the present time in the life of the average working-boy. I gave up asking the lad if he went to the Cinema, because the response was invariably in the affirmative. Usually the boy will go about twice a week. It costs him at a cheap show not more than a penny or twopence a time; and it occupies practically his whole evening. No fewer than forty-seven "Picture-dromes," with a seating capacity of 32,836, cater for the picture-loving public of Birmingham; and each one exhibits three afternoons a week, and each evening twice to an audience of some hundreds.[2]

With the stage-managers of theatres, it is almost axiomatic that three-fourths of the appeal of the play is *to the sense of sight*. The eye seems to be the organ through which we human beings most extensively drink in our impressions of the outside world. Now the moving picture appeals with overwhelming force to the eye. And to follow it requires very little mental exertion. It

[1] *Harper's Magazine* (Editorial), September 1912, p. 634.

[2] Reports of the Licensing Committee for 1912, p. 14. The Clerk to the Justices informs me that since the Report was published (January 1913) "applications for fifteen new Cinematograph Exhibitions have been received and are under consideration."

compels attention, and the impressions it makes are very vivid and lasting. The invariable musical accompaniment, appropriate to the picture, serves to engrave the impression deeper still.

"Away down in Whitechapel," says Mr. Denis Crane in a recent article,[1] "I was lucky enough to find a boy who had never been to one of these exhibitions; him I took in, and while he was watching the pictures I studied his face. And it was a study!

"At first I fancied he was lying when he said he had never seen a Cinematograph show. 'It is surely impossible,' thought I, 'to find a child in these days who has never been in.' But afterwards I was satisfied he had told the truth.

"The first picture introduced to us a story of three companions who enabled a fourth so to ingratiate himself with the father of his fiancée that his marriage with her, formerly frowned at, was not only permitted, but also encouraged.

"My little friend watched it spellbound. Speechless with wonder and enjoyment, he opened wide his mouth as well as his eyes, as if it also were an avenue to his soul."

Nothing surprised me more than to find how continually the boys whom I questioned referred to Cinema films for their information. Even their religion they pick up at the Cinema. You will find that they have "seen Hell" there, in the shape of Dante's "Purgatorio"; they have seen "the Fall of Man"; they may even have seen "the Life of Jesus." I asked one boy what he thought of "Votes for Women," and he immediately told me of the picture he had seen of the poor husband cooking the dinner because his wife was a suffragette. The patriotism of another was apparently fed in the main by pictures of the King and British soldiers that he saw on some of the films.

It has been conjectured that the "school-boy strikes" of 1911 were directly caused by the exhibition of films of the strike-scenes in various parts of the country. The

[1] *The Quiver*, March 1912, p. 455, in "The Picture Palace: How we are to regard it?"

following extract[1] (typical of many) is illustrative of the vivid appeal that these films make to youths :—

"Strong protests against the Picture Palace craze are being made in Nottingham by religious bodies, who are joining with the proprietors of the existing film theatres in an effort to prevent any future Cinema licences being granted.

"Mr. F. Booth, secretary of the Beeston Temperance League, condemns the craze as striking a vital blow at the Band of Hope movement, and declares it has a pernicious effect on children.

"Bands of boys, fired by the cowboy drama, have paraded the streets armed with pistols.

"The Carlton Council attribute a drop of 50 per cent. in the returns of the Children's Lending Library to the same cause. The Nottingham Watch Committee are being urged not to sanction any more shows of this description."

In Birmingham the association between the Picture Palace and Juvenile Crime is so marked, that the Justices have recently requested the General Purposes Committee to take into consideration the existing arrangements for the admission of children to those entertainments.[2] Any visitor to the Children's Courts will be struck by the constant references of young offenders to the Picture Palace, either as suggesting a criminal action or providing a motive for housebreaking and larceny. (In the first five months of this year twenty-one young persons alleged that they had stolen to get money to go to the Picture Palace.)

Granting that the influence of the Picture Palace is so potent and so universal, it becomes a question of the greatest moment, *what sort of influence this is.* It is exceedingly difficult to make this estimate without a personal bias, so perhaps the best mode of presentation will be to let picture bills and so forth speak for themselves. Here are three successive programmes from a

[1] *Daily News*, March 1st, 1913.
[2] See *Birmingham Daily Post*, June 2nd, 1913.

Cinema, rather above the average in the class of film presented :—

Early Days in the West.
The Way of the Mountains.

The Smoker.	The Drummer.	Bloomer's Mother-in-law.

The Clubman and the Crook.
The Wreckers.

The Stolen Symphony.	
Bunny all at Sea.	Tootles buys a Gun.

Music Hath Charms.
Dupin in Search of Quietness.
Hawkeye has to Hurry !
Bludsoe's Dilemma.

A White Lie.

The Girl of the Mountains.

'Twixt Love and Ambition.

The Decapitated Head.

The Silent Signal.

Here is the advertisement of films shortly to be released. It was twice repeated on the covers of two subsequent issues of the widely circulated magazine *Pictures*:—

EVERYTHING WORTH HAVING IS COMING YOUR WAY.

So be sure You don't miss the following :—

The Dandy, or Mr. Dawson Turns the Tables.

A delightful comedy from start to finish, featuring Miss Edith Storey.

Doctor Bridget.

Your old friend "Bunny" in a new rôle. See it and laugh.

The Song of the Sea Shell.

Showing how a young girl, tired of society, becomes a nurse, falls in love with a doctor, and all ends happily.

SIGNAL OF DISTRESS.

Showing how two lovers are re-united after exciting adventures. Featuring Miss Florence Turner and Jean.

NATOOSA.

A captivating Indian drama, showing how a girl sacrifices her life to save her lover.

ADAM AND EVE.

Yielding to the voice of the Tempter, the tempted are driven from their Happy Home into the land of unrest, seeking peace and finding none.

ALL FOR A GIRL.

Another good comedy, showing how Billy had to make love to the fat cook before he could win the girl he loved.

And finally, I quote the last four advertisements on the first page opened of the *Kinematograph Monthly Film Record* for April 1913 (page 45) :—

A Doctor's Photograph.—Dr. Gillibrand saves the life of a child, the daughter of Smart, a burglar. Soon after, he visits his sweetheart, Sybil, whose home has been selected as the field for his next operations by Smart. The latter, while making his haul, finds the doctor's photograph and in his agitation drops it. This leads to his being caught by Sybil, who pleads that he be let go. The kindness of the lovers so affects the criminal, that he decides to turn over a new leaf and start life afresh in the doctor's employ.

Leonie.—Landon, an artist, is loved by his model, Leonie, but he is blind to her affection. He becomes infatuated with Muriel Glenn, a rich society girl, who heartlessly leads him on until he declares his passion. Then she scorns him. Dejected and dazed, Landon finds comfort in Leonie, and now he awakens to the fact that he loves her.

All on Account of a Transfer.—Frantz cannot speak English, so a conductor of a tram, when trying to tell where to change cars, suggests that he follow a lady sitting in front, whom he knows is going the other passenger's way. The lady, however, discovers that she has some time to spare, and decides to do a little shopping. But wherever she goes, Frantz follows her, until at last he is given in charge. Eventually he manages to explain his predicament and the lady volunteers to guide him. Cupid finds more work.

An Heroic Rescue.—Braggs happens to be walking along the street when a poor woman falls on the ice in front of a motor-car. She is not seriously injured, but Braggs is very persistent in giving his card. When he gets to his club, he calls several members around him and tells of a most wonderful rescue that he made of a beautiful maiden, run down by a road-hog, and how he himself carried her to the drug store and ordered the proper drugs to administer, and rode home with her in an ambulance, and describes in glowing terms the profound thanks which he received from her parents. Just as he is about to finish the victim of the accident forces her way into the club, with a subpœna for Braggs to appear as witness.

Such subjects, as the reader can test by his own observations, represent the staples of the ordinary moving-picture exhibition. Such are the films which the average working-boy sees a hundred times in a year. There is in most shows a sprinkling of pictures "that isn't over-proper," and, of course, one theatre differs from another according to the propensities of the manager. But, generally speaking, there is not much of a directly vicious nature. The inscription over one picture theatre in Birmingham seems pretty correct as a description of the show usually offered :—"To cause a smile, perchance a tear, but ne'er a blush." And yet, on the other hand, there is singularly little, in fact almost nothing, of an elevating kind. The managers, who probably gauge the public appetite with rough accuracy, believe that educational films are not popular. "I try to put 'em on, but they don't like 'em," a manager declared to me apologetically. Any one who cares to go the round of

these shows, or to go to the same one regularly for a few weeks, will find himself confronted by a monotonous round of cowboys and Indians, beefy heroes called "Jack," and nattie heroines called "Nancy," and all the other stock characters of modern melodrama. Jokes about married life, maudlin love romances, sensational crimes, ludicrous and impossible occurrences, absurd feats of daring,—such themes are the stock-in-trade of the ordinary picture show. The really fine films (such as those of Jesus of Nazareth, Les Misérables, Paul Rainey's African Hunt, Quo Vadis, etc.) tend to be confined to a few better-class theatres; they appear only rarely at the ordinary Cinema and are not popular.[1] Most of the films exhibited are pictorial representations of short, silly, sensational romances; rendered more sensational, because acts alone, and not motives and psychology, can be shown effectively on the screen. The other films are mainly what are called "comics": pictorial absurdities, such as the Cinematograph alone is capable of perpetrating. And interspersed with these is the thinnest possible sprinkling of "educational" films depicting current events, natural history, and other real things.

As far as entertainment goes, there is little to be said against such shows. The boy is amused, and he is, on the whole, innocently amused. But the fact that the manager has to cater for an audience of adults and boys together makes the whole "show" much worse for the boy than if it had been for those of his own age alone. It initiates him prematurely into the adult point of view and into adult life in a way that is not at all in keeping with his natural unfoldment. And in so far as it educates at all, it can hardly be said to train the boy to be a better husband or father or worker or citizen.

[1] A higher price is usually charged for these "star" films and for the better Picture Palaces, which makes them more inaccessible for poor boys.

The higher powers of the mind are rather lulled to sleep than spurred to activity in a show which leaves nothing to the reason or the imagination. It is a faithful reflector—as it must be, if it is to be a commercial success—of the instincts and feelings and tastes of the average working-men and boys; it merely multiplies and intensifies the boy's stock of commonplace ideas, without enlarging or ennobling them.

The Music Hall.

Perhaps second only to the Picture Palace in supplying the youth with his ideas about life is the Music Hall. I found that most of the boys included in this inquiry went to the Music Hall, every Saturday evening at least; many of them go twice in the week. As with the Cinema, the programme is always changed Monday and Thursday, and there are two "houses" every evening. There are in Birmingham seven Music Halls, capable of seating 16,530 persons. A seat in the gallery costs only twopence; so we need not be surprised that juveniles frequent the Music Halls in considerable numbers.

At the Music Hall performance there are ten or twelve "turns," each lasting about ten minutes. Two or three of these will usually be taken up with the "patter," which may be in the form of monologue or duologue, or as the padding between the verses of a comic song. This "patter" is one of the most characteristic features of the Music Hall entertainment; it accompanies almost every turn, even those devoted to gymnastics or juggling. It consists in a running fire of pleasantries, full of topical and local allusions, and based upon a recognised and accepted bedwork of ideas in the audience. Usually one turn is devoted to purely instrumental music and another to vocal music; and then there is the young lady in tights, who performs on the trapeze or dances in short skirts; there may be a

contortionist or a juggler or a conjurer; usually a moving picture; and always a playlet of a farcical or melodramatic kind. In the two programmes that I first pick up from those I have collected, the subtitles are :—" The Original Chocolate Coon; Character Vocalist; The Versatile Girl; The Wonderful Dog Comedian,—The Dog with the Human Brain and Gold Teeth; The Famous Hebrew Comedians; Refined Gymnasts, Contortionists, and Speciality Dancers; A Refined and Novel Military Musical Act; Comic Picture on the Bioscope; The Sensational and Awe-Inspiring Act, entitled 'Scenes on a Battleship.'" And in the second programme :—" Eccentric Comedian; A Scotch Comedy Sketch, entitled 'The Heid of the Hoose'; Tenor Chorus Vocalist; Comedy Acrobats in their Funny Absurdity 'Golfing'; Comedy Act, 'Mary and the Squire'; Lady Gymnast; Charming Musical Entertainment; Comedienne and Dancer; Hipposcope Pictures always up-to-date."

There is more indecency in the Music Hall performance than there is in that at the Picture Palace. Pictures are in a language in which we all see alike; but there is an unwritten language of vulgarity and obscenity known to the Music Hall audience, in which vile things can be said that appear perfectly inoffensive in the King's English. But if a person is not squeamish, there is not much that is obnoxious. What is really more objectionable than occasional indecency, is the unrelieved silliness and superficiality of it all. As amusement now and then, to people full of other interests, it might serve as relaxation. But the boy goes fifty and more times a year; the witticisms and the suggestions fall into fertile soil in his receptive mind. Time after time he hears drunkenness joked about; sees prize-fighting and horse-racing, drinking and gambling, taken as a matter of course. He scarcely hears of love or marriage except as a jest. Religion and politics, work and social life are all shown to the boy in a farcical and fictitious light; he is seeing the world, not in an

honest glass, but in one of those distorted mirrors that make a caricature of whatever they reflect. And to the development of any of his higher powers of reason or morality, the Music Hall offers no inducement whatsoever.

The popular Music Hall songs must sink especially deeply into the boy's mind. He hears them first at the Hall, and the singer often teaches the audience the chorus. The tunes are of a kind that are easy to learn and difficult to forget. The words of fifty of them can be bought for a penny; and the boy hums or sings or whistles them times without number. Now, while it seems to be usually true that the advertised titles of Cinema plays are much worse than the actual films, the titles of these songs are much better than the reality. Most of the songs are merely empty of all that is beautiful, but many of them are full of indecency. In them, especially, there is the most skilful and persistent use of the device of the *double entendre*. If the reader is interested to judge the matter for himself, he can buy for a penny a "Song Annual" giving "All the latest." I quote here the second half of the title-page of a recent issue of these. It gives an indication of the nature of the ideas that such catchy songs are engraved deep into the consciousness of these boys:—"Leaf by leaf the roses fall. Let's make a night of it to-night. Who were you with last night? I'm on my honeymoon. Patricia. Have a drop of gin, Joe? Let's all go where the crowd goes. I want a girl (just like the girl that married dear old Dad). Paree! that's the place for me. Oh, what a lovely tune! No wonder you called it 'the last waltz.' My word! I'll have your socks! He played it on his fiddle-dee-dee. Silver Bell. Such a thing is impossible, really. Iola. Get away, you're kidding! I'm going back to Dixie. You do look well in your old Dutch bonnet. Give me my fourpence back. Meet me, Jeannie. Will you promenade with me? Follow the footprints in the snow. Let's all

go into the ballroom. When the convent bell is ringing. See what Percy's picked up in the Park! In dear old Tennessee. Ring o' roses. There's a girl in Havana. Just a wee deoch-an-doris."

Cheap Literature.

Of all the boys whom I questioned scarcely any patronised the public libraries; very few indeed read any better-class literature. The bulk of them, as do many boys of the middle classes, read what are called "penny dreadfuls" and "halfpenny comics." These can be bought second-hand very cheaply indeed; they are freely circulated from one boy to another, and are read to the exclusion of almost all other literature, except perhaps Sporting and Police News in the *Mail*. There is a widespread impression that this literature is of a most pernicious character; but, it certainly seems to me that its evil influence has been exaggerated, and that it is not so harmful to the boy as either the Picture Palace or the Music Hall. These other forms of amusement cater more for the grown-up than for the juvenile, and the boy is introduced into a circle of ideas doubly unfortunate to him at his immature stage of growth; but the literature boys read is usually expressly written for boys, and the producers of it make no sustained attempt to exploit sex as a comic theme, or to ridicule social and political life and current affairs. Working-boys are not greatly interested in things of real life; they want sensation, excitement, melodrama; they love romance, no matter how fantastic or far-fetched. Their imaginations are prepared for any flight of fancy; their instincts are all agog for anything that is lurid or weird or bloodthirsty; and the literature that is prepared for them makes the most direct appeal to these boyish instincts. The boy, tired with a real life that presents little enough of romance, finds a vent for all the emotional stirrings

that thrill in him, in these sensational "shockers." Here are some typical titles and synopses, extracted from some of the boys' favourite papers :—

I.

"'THE GREAT TURF MYSTERY.'

Chief Characters in the Story—

Sexton Blake	. The Great British Detective.
Tinker . .	. Blake's Assistant.
Pedro . .	. The Wonderful Bloodhound.
George Marsden Plummer .	. The Great Master Criminal.
Abe Gulwood.	. A Rascally Bookmaker.
Spud Lugsby .	. A Thorough-paced Scoundrel.
Mr. Arthur Wayne-Fleet . .	. A Sporting Millionaire.

The First Chapter.—Black Maria attacked in the Slums. The escape from the Prison Van. A £250,000 Turf Fraud."

II.

"'THE SKY PIRATES.'

An Astonishing Tale of Mystery, Exploit and Adventure, told in a most Thrilling Style.

Chief Characters in our grand Drama of the Air—

Harry Young, Captain of the Monarch of the Air ; an escaped convict rescued from prison by Muriel. He is in search of a man for whose crime he suffers.

Muriel Flanders, Owner of the Airship and Queen of the Lovely Isle. There is a mystery surrounding her real name.

M'Culloch, one of the Airship's crew, who plays a traitor's part. He swears vengeance against Muriel and Harry.

Captain Hank, the disguised Earl, in league with M'Culloch to bring about disaster to Harry, Muriel, the airship, and all connected with it.

Bryon, Stalton, Neville, Treasure, Toogood, Bransgrove, Crew of the Airship.

Detectives, Smugglers, etc."

III.

" Third Long Instalment of this Striking New School Story.

" THE WORST FELLOW AT BURNSIDE:

A Story of Public School Life and its Pitfalls.

' I'm only a Waster, so what does it matter ? Let the other fellow win ; I——DON'T——CARE ! '

' CALLED A WASTER.'

This is the Story of Dick Lawless, Waster.

Dick has come to Burnside at the age of seventeen, or over, with a bad record behind him. All who knew him have practically given him up as hopeless ; but Lorna Beresford, a girl who has been brought up with him since they were children, knows that he has good in him as well as bad, and because she is

A STAUNCH GIRL CHUM

she wants to save Dick from himself.

Dick has a stepbrother at Burnside, Steve Thurston by name. Steve is the exact opposite to Dick—studious, ambitious, a bit of a prig and selfish.

At a farewell meeting with the two scholars, Lorna privately begs Steve to look after the Waster, and he promises to do his best for him ; but no sooner has Lorna left for home than Steve begins to rue his promise.

He opens a letter that has been entrusted to him to deliver to the Head. This letter is from his own father, and in it appears the statement that Dick is having

HIS LAST CHANCE

at Burnside. If he fails to make good he is to be cast adrift, and the whole of the family fortune in that case will go to Steve alone.

Even as the full meaning of the fateful letter is growing clearer and clearer in Steve Thurston's brain, fresh temptation arises.

Pickering, a Sixth Former, comes in to say that Dick has already started badly by falling in with Todhouse & Co., a set of swell blackguards, and that they are all going on a joy-ride in a motor that night.

Steve realises that Dick is in great danger, and he resolves to warn him at once.

Then he thinks of all that he stands to gain if the Waster comes to grief, and so he never utters the warning, and Dick Lawless sets off on a mad spree which ends in a smash.

After the motor accident Dick quarrels with his companions, who leave him to get back to school by himself. Feeling shaken and ill he buys some brandy, which intoxicates him, so that in attempting to re-enter the school he falls through a window. RODDY CHAMPION, a fag, and GREENTREE, a senior, find Dick lying helpless on the class-room floor, and, disgusted though they are, they hide him in a cupboard, just as Mr. FENWICK, the master, comes along.

But Fenwick is not to be hoodwinked. He catches sight of the cupboard and goes straight towards it to investigate. . . ."

IV.

"THE STORY OF A STRANGE GENIUS WHO, POSSESSED OF WONDERFUL POWERS OF INVENTION, SETS FORTH TO DEAL OUT JUSTICE TO THE EVIL-DOERS OF THE MODERN WORLD.

'THE WINGED MAN;

OR,

'TWIXT MIDNIGHT AND DAWN.'

PROLOGUE.

The WINGED MAN, a weird and wonderful being, suddenly appears from out of the unknown. Who he is no one yet knows. Whence he came no one can tell. But away up on the bleak Yorkshire coast is a subterranean mysterious lair which he regards as his home, and which his dwarf-like servant man, Ghat, keeps in order for him. Many are the tremendous situations in which the Winged Man figures. DANBY DRUCE, the world-famous detective, has vowed to capture the Winged Man, and Professor HEXMIDER, an inventor, supplies him with a pair of wings similar to those used by the Winged Man. With these the detective meets his terrible foe in a combat several thousand feet above the earth, but is hopelessly beaten. One night a beautiful girl, MARY EVANSON, attempts to commit suicide in the Thames, but Danby Druce rescues her, and later the girl mysteriously disappears. Unbeknown to Mary Evanson, both Danby Druce and the Winged Man fall deeply in love with her."

V.

"OUR GRAND CHRISTMAS DOUBLE NUMBER THIS WEEK.

'MOTHER LOVE.'

A Pathetic Story which will touch the Heart of every Reader.

What will not a mother do for the sake of the child she loves ? Mother love has prompted heroic actions which have made the world ring, and also mothers have found themselves forced to do things which they would have shrunk from had it not been for the sake of their beloved little ones. This narrative tells in the most striking manner the story of a mother who was forced to offend against the law for the sake of her darlings.

CHATS WITH FOOTLIGHT FAVOURITES.

This week Miss Ruth Vincent. All the great star artistes are delighted with this unique series.

OUR SPECIAL SHORT STORY.

This Week :—'For He's a Jolly Good Fellow.'

In this splendid New Series we shall present some of the most clever, dramatic, and interesting stories ever told. Only the work of the best authors will appear, and I have every confidence that my readers will be delighted with this new departure.—Editor.

THE INVISIBLE DOCTOR.

This splendid New Series is only Just Starting. Commence at Once.

This is the most original Series of Stories that have ever appeared anywhere. They tell of the adventures of Doctor Dick Studleigh, who became possessed of a drug which gave him the power to make himself invisible at will.

Oblige me by telling all your friends about these wonderful new narratives.—THE EDITOR.

This Week :—' A VOICE FROM BEYOND.'

OUR SPORTS PAGE.

Read this splendid Article written by an Expert.

Conducted by J. M. D., Sporting Editor of the *Evening News*, London.

The great national winter game is now in full swing. In these articles " J. M. D.," probably the greatest Expert who writes on the pastime, enlightens our readers on many unknown aspects of the game.

' DORA COURAGE, TYPIST.'

SPLENDID NEW STORIES OF OFFICE LIFE AND ADVENTURE.

DORA COURAGE is a girl our readers will soon fall in love with. A neat, quick, and clever typist, at the same time she is a very shrewd observer of Human Nature. Her duties take her to very strange places, and ofttimes she finds herself in strange circumstances and still stranger company. Always alert and on the side of Right and Justice, her experiences make a most thrilling and interesting record.

This Week :—' WHAT OCCURRED AT THE REX MUSIC HALL.'

' THE GIRL WHO TRUSTED HIM.'

THE GREATEST SERIAL DRAMA OF MODERN TIMES.

The story of a girl who trusted and believed in her sweetheart all through the bitter times when it seemed that the world was against him.

TOUGH & CO., WHOLESALE DEALERS.

Nothing like a good laugh. These stories would make an Owl grin.

A little laughter sweetens life. Read these stories again and again. Never a dull line in them.

This Week :—' THE VANISHED FURNITURE.'

THE LEADING MYSTERY OF THE DAY.

READ ABOUT: 'ADAM DAUNT, THE MILLIONAIRE DETECTIVE.'

Since the days when the wonderful detective stories of that ill-starred genius, Edgar Allan Poe, astonished the world, no investigator of mysterious crimes has proved so fascinating as ADAM DAUNT. He is a millionaire and a gentleman, but a terror to evil-doers.

This Week :—'TWO ROGUES, A GIRL AND A FOOL.'

'THE WOMAN WITH THE BLACK HEART.'

DESCRIBING THE ADVENTURES OF THE MOST WONDERFUL WOMAN IN THE WORLD.

The Woman with the Black Heart is now probably one of the best-known characters in the world. Her thrilling exploits have delighted readers in all countries where the English language is spoken, and though she is stern enough in her dealing with wrong-doers, yet so unerring is her instinct on the side of right and justice that all who have heard of her love her.

This Week :—'LITTLE LADY MURIEL.'

'THE ADVENTURES OF GERTIE GOODSORT AND HER LITTLE SISTER SUE.'

They make quite a splash.

'DAINTY DAISY DIMPLE, THE TEA-SHOP GIRL.'

Picture Palace and Music Hall and Cheap Literature seem to be the three great sources of *ideas* to the ordinary working-boy. We must think of him during these years of adolescence as having a mind that is sponge-like in its nature, in that it will drink in greedily ideas from all the things with which it comes in contact. Or, to vary the metaphor, the boy's mind is in many respects a blank sheet at fourteen, and the writing that will be engraved upon it is dependent on the influences through which the boy passes. The home and the factory ordinarily contribute nothing of an educational character; Church and Evening Class, Public Library and Boys' Club make little or no impression. But the sponge sucks all it can from the Picture Palace and the Music Hall and the Cheap Literature. These agencies write their language deep on the blank sheet of the boy's mind. The sex-instinct, the most sacred and vital thing in life, becomes charged year by year with frivolous and vulgar suggestion. The senses of the adolescent, now open at their widest, are opened not to Nature and Art, but to cheap and tawdry pantomime; his kindling imagination is not nourished with fine, heroic literature, but with the commonest rubbish in print; his emotions are fed, not with gracious and elevating influences, but with unnatural excitants. And all those great cravings that Nature has implanted in him, the intellectual curiosity, the longing for idealism, the hero-worship, the splendid ambition, the creative genius, the religious instinct—all of these are dying for lack of nourishment. Or, perhaps we should say that thorns spring up and choke them.

Other Influences.

A few other influences, better known because more written about, must be mentioned. Football is the greatest single interest in the life of the ordinary working-boy. Some do not care for it; a few play it themselves;

but most of them spend Saturday afternoon in watching "Birmingham" or "the Villa." No subject arouses their enthusiasm like football. Nothing is so hotly discussed or so accurately known. And if you probe deep enough, you will often find that the boy's hero is one of the muscular and dexterous members of the Villa team.

The remaining great source of amusement is the Street. The boy spends a large part of his spare time in loafing about the streets with his pals, playing games, singing, exchanging witticisms, and generally making himself obnoxious to the police and the public. Most of this recreation is quite harmless; but there is no encouragement in this street-going to the higher life! Most boys seem to keep clear of the Public-house for the first few years after leaving school; almost all of them Smoke Woodbines or "Coffin-Nails," as they facetiously term them. A large number of them Gamble on pigeon-flying, football, etc.—a habit that has the most unfortunate effects in unsteadying the character. Many of them, even at fourteen, parade the streets arm in arm with girls. The Girl, however, is not a serious factor in the boy's circle of interests till he reaches 16 or 17; at that age he begins "walking out"; and we should remember that it is nearly always in the street that the working-boy makes the acquaintance of the girl he will afterwards marry. There are a few other less reputable influences in the lives of a certain number of boys, such as the Dancing-Saloon, and if he is unlucky enough to have no home, the Lodging-House; but these are not factors in the life of the ordinary working-lad.[1]

[1] See A. Paterson, "Across the Bridges," p. 93 et seq., for a graphic picture of the street-life of boys. Mr. Paterson says at p. 103 of his fine book:—"Such and such are the relaxations open to 'the Heads' in their spare time—a strange medley of influences in the moulding of men's character. They would appear to offer but a poor choice, and should they accept them all in turn, they would be braced neither in body nor mind for the struggle of manhood."

Habits and Ideas of Some Typical Boys.

The purpose of this investigation was to discover what causes are at work to produce Industrial Inefficiency and Inferior Citizenship within the few years after a boy leaves school.

It is impossible to illustrate this process of deterioration by any exact or scientific method. We cannot tabulate the details of the boy's physique and personality when he was at school, and contrast them in parallel columns with what he is to-day.[1] But, perhaps, if I summarise here some of the friendly talks I have had with the more communicative of these boys, it will at any rate convey some impression of their mental condition.

In order to do this, we will take four boys from Class II., two of them from Group A and two from Group B. These, it will be remembered, are all boys apparently destined for unskilled work, the two former, however, being boys who might with good fortune have become skilled workers. And then we will take two more boys from Class III.—those who seem destined for

[1] The nearest approach to such a tabulation with which I am acquainted was presented to the National Conference on the Prevention of Destitution in 1911 (Report of Proceedings, p. 275). The Head of the Evening School established by Messrs. Brunner, Mond & Co. at Winnington, stated:—"Undoubtedly the youth who joins an Evening School at 16 or later, after wasting the intervening years since leaving the Day School, is far more backward than the boy who makes no break between the two. It is astonishing how quickly boys forget what they have learned unless it is kept up in some way. I have known youths come to school at 17 or 18 and who had forgotten everything they had ever learned at school except reading. As a proof of this an examination held in elementary subjects at the end of the first session after compulsory attendance was introduced, showed that forty-five passed in Standard III., forty-three in Standard IV., thirty-five in Standard V., twelve in Standard VI., and seven in Standard VII. As at that time boys were required to have passed the Fifth Standard before being engaged, it shows that nearly 62 per cent. of them could not be brought back to the same point with one session's teaching."

unemployableness. These boys will be roughly representative of the various kinds of lads included in the great class of unskilled workers.

I. Two Boys typical of the rather Better Class of Boy-Worker.

1. G. G., a boy of class II., group A. (p. 37).

This boy's tastes are above the average. He does not care for the Music Hall or for Football; he only goes now and then to the Picture Palace; and he reads fairy stories like the Arabian Nights; he is fond of his home and likes to spend his evenings there. He has never been to Church or Sunday School since he left school, and his ideas on religion are of the vaguest; he thinks Paul had some connection with David, while Jonah and Noah are unknown characters. He takes no interest in politics; believes the Unionists are in favour of Home Rule, while the Liberals are out to put rates and taxes on food.

2. H. H., another boy of class II., group A. (p. 39).

This youth goes to the Picture Palace twice a week and the Music Hall twice; but he does not play or see Football. At the Cinema, he loves the detective films most and then the "comics." His favourite literature is *Chips* and the *Butterfly*. He has no connection with any place of worship. He knows even less about the Old and New Testament than G. G. The names "Liberal," "Tory" and "Socialist" are meaningless to him; he did not know what any party was doing or even for what parties existed. Parliament was a thing beyond his range of comprehension. He believed that Mr. Asquith was a Socialist, that Christopher Columbus swam the English Channel, and that Mr. Edison's forte was writing poems.

II. Two Boys typical of the bulk of Boys leaving the Elementary School and graduating into Unskilled Labour.

I. K. L., a boy of class II., group B. (p. 47).

This youth revels in the Cinema and is a connoisseur in discussing the films. He likes "Travel Pictures" as much as "Drama Pictures" like Monte Cristo, and he loves Indians and Cowboys; "comic" films do not move him to enthusiasm; love pictures make him miserable ("they kill one another on purpose to have a woman"). He is very fond of the dancing and singing at the Music Hall and Pantomime. He is a keen attendant at football matches and talked to me at length about the prospects of Birmingham in the League. He buys the *Gem* and borrows the *Dreadnought*; in the *Birmingham Daily Mail* he likes to read of "accidents, suffragettes and crimes"; on Saturday he expends a copper on the *Sporting Mail*. His hero in fiction is a sea-going man who gets shipwrecked; while he takes too little interest in girls to know what sort of a heroine he likes. He knew a fair amount about Christianity, not because he went to Church or Sunday School, but because of his experiences at the Cinema. In Hell, I learned, there are "red-hot stones raining down," in which inclement weather there are "men walking about with a little pair of knicks on and no shirt nor nothing; they have to row in boats and men prod them on; and then they get poked in holes upside-down with just their ankles showing." Heaven, he told me, was "like no rain and all sunshine; all happiness and no sinning; you never want for anything, and all live together like brothers." But, in common with very many of these boys, he did not seem to think there was any life beyond the grave! "When you're dead, you're dead,"

is their usual verdict; but they are very vague on all these ultimate issues.

K. L. talked to me at some length on politics. *Parliament?* "A kind of place where they have Acts made out to stop little lads smoking. 'Ouse of Lords first, then the 'Ouse of Commons, and then the King signs 'is name, and it's an Act." He did not know what Home Rule meant; the aim of the Budget, he believed, was to tax everything coming into England; Liberals and Unionists were only names to him. He knew Lloyd-George (in common with every boy I asked); and (like almost every other boy) could only surmise who were Mr. Asquith and Mr. Balfour. He knew that Edison had invented the Cinematograph and the Gramophone; and said that "Columbus invented America." He thought Sir Oliver Lodge was an actor. (Sir Oliver Lodge, the distinguished Chancellor of Birmingham University, seems to be as unknown to most working-boys as I found Darwin and Gladstone to be. It was interesting to see the blank look on the boy's face as I mentioned the names of prominent celebrities and famous historical characters; and to note the swift transfiguration when I said "Sexton Blake," or "George Robey," or "Charlie Wallace.")

2. K. W., ANOTHER BOY OF CLASS II., GROUP B. (p. 47).

K. W. patronises the Picture Palace scarcely oftener than once a week, and he says he never goes to the Music Hall. Football is his main interest; he has "never missed a match." He reads *Jockey Jacket, The Marvel,* and detective stories. He says he doesn't like home and is never in it. His knowledge of Christianity was vague and limited, as in the case of the other boys. He seemed to know nothing coherent about politics; he timidly hazarded the suggestion that Mr. Asquith was an "M.P.", and had never heard of Mr. Bonar Law.

III. Two Boys typical of Those who seem destined for Unemployableness.

I. M. C., a boy of class III. (p. 57).

This boy is another ardent lover of the Cinema. He goes three or four times a week at a penny a time. He likes "burglars and comics." The Music Hall he patronises less frequently, preferring the Picture Palace. His favourite fiction is *Butterfly, Merry and Bright*, and schoolboy and detective stories. Detectives are his heroes in fiction; he takes only a languid interest in heroines. He likes the Music Hall ragtime songs, and "Everybody's Doin' It" ("the great ragtime triumph") is his best-loved tune; he likes songs because he can sing at his work. He alleged as his reason for giving up Church that he didn't like the Vicar, who stopped when boys whispered! And he said he "hadn't missed it much." He did not believe in God because, he said, "If you look all the way through, there can't be a God. They say God made Adam, but 'ow did God come alive?" (His atheistical attitude was apparently the fruit of a discussion he overheard in a coffee-house.) He knew a little about the life of Jesus, but (as with most of these boys) did not know either the numbers or the names of the disciples. Heaven is a place where there are "a lot of angels"; and Hell he had seen at the Cinema. But he was no believer in a future life, and "cared for none of these things."

Parliament? "They decide on one thing and another, making up fresh rules best way they can." *House of Lords?* "Haven't 'eard much." *House of Commons?* "Where all the members go." *King?* "Just sits down and studies things, and signs his name to things he'd like passed." *Votes for Women?* (He knew what this meant in common with every boy I

asked.) He did not know what Home Rule or the Budget meant. "The Liberals all go towards Lloyd-George and are in favour of higher rates."

The Tories want to "lower rates and stop foreigners coming in." "Lloyd-George is trying to make England worse than what it is." He has "heard of" Mr. Asquith and Mr. Balfour, but not of Mr. Bonar Law.

2. C. W., ANOTHER BOY OF CLASS III. (p. 72).

This boy said he hated his home: and having seen it, I can quite believe his statement. He spends his earnings at the Picture Palace, the Music Hall, and in loafing about the streets with mates and girls. (He has been in the Militia, and apparently this privileges him to have no fewer than five girls who will walk out with him.) He is intensely interested in football, horse-racing and boxing. He confessed shamelessly to gambling and to other worse vices, that most boys are either guiltless of or silent about. He reads the *Comics*, *The Gem*, *Butterfly*, *Picture Fun*, *England's Boxing*, the *Sporting Buff* for football and the *Mail* for Police News. He mentioned Crippen, when I asked him for his favourite characters in fiction, and said:—"There's a fellow I like to read about." His superficial knowledge of Christianity was above the average, due probably to the length of time spent in his religious instruction in a Roman Catholic school and to the religious services in the Army. He neither knew nor cared about politics; nor about any of the parties or principal current measures (excepting, as always, Votes for Women and the Insurance Act!). He apparently did not even know of the existence of Mr. Asquith, nor of either the present or the late leader of the Opposition. But he knew of Mr. Lloyd-George's existence, and considered that it ought to be terminated by his being buried alive. He was ignorant of the names of Tennyson and Dickens,

Columbus, Edison, Gladstone; Shakespeare, he thought, was the "head of an army"; while Birmingham's great statesman, John Bright, he thought was a "thief." (Birmingham's other great politician, Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, he knew, in common with practically every other boy.)

Now these six boys, whose opinions on things are here recorded, are not exceptional. If we except about one-third of the boys leaving the Elementary School, these boys represent the remaining two-thirds.

And similar questions that I asked of a very large number of these boys revealed a similar ignorance of what ought to be common knowledge.

In three or four years these youths will be having a vote; and it seems probable that after that interval most of them will know as little that is relevant about politics as they do now. In three or four years, most of them will have become heads of households, and begin to have the care of the new generation entrusted to them. One wonders what sort of religious or moral training they will give their offspring? It is not that they are "bad" in the conventional sense of that word. They are mostly kind and generous and cheerful; and are capable of heroism and self-sacrifice.[1] And to those who say it is "their own fault," we would retort with Burke's saying: "You cannot indict a nation." Equally pointless is the remark more fortunate people are apt to make: "Oh! they can rise out of it if they want to." It is true that a boy here and there, possessed of exceptional physique and superior quality, *does* emerge from apparently the most hopeless conditions. The fact remains that the *ordinary* boy, as we see, is

[1] In order to get some coal for his mother during the Coal Strike, one of these boys (H. J., p. 46) went down to the canal, dived into the icy water and fetched up lumps of coal from the canal bottom, piece by piece. This is an action which compares favourably with the theatrical gallantries of Raleigh and Sidney, that we were all taught to admire at school.

not possessed of sufficient intellect and will-power to establish more satisfactory relations with his environment.

The school gives the boy an excellent start in life up to the age of 14. Then Nature makes it possible for the boy to be moulded into strength of body, sensitiveness of conscience, power of intellect and fulness of character. But existing social conditions are such that the boy cannot escape being subjected to a succession of influences that leave him at early manhood a caricature of the human being Nature intended him to be. This waste of potentiality is the real tragedy. Nature has provided the period of adolescence for the purpose of building up the boy into a splendid manhood, and instead of using these years for that high purpose, we ruthlessly and shamelessly abandon him to industrial and social conditions that cannot but disfigure his body and destroy his soul.

CHAPTER VIII.

INDUSTRIAL CONDITIONS.

Machinery Fundamental in Modern Industrial Conditions.

It is becoming increasingly recognised, even by those little acquainted with the problem of Boy Labour, that modern industrial conditions make it impossible to "revive the old system of apprenticeship," or, indeed, to "teach the boy a trade." In the Birmingham of a century and a half ago, "noted for the most ingenious artificers in boxes, buckles, buttons, and other iron and steel wares," [1] there were indeed "mysteries" in each craft, initiation into which required a full seven years' apprenticeship. The craftsman of that day learned all of the different manual processes employed in the thing he produced. He could make you an article complete from the start to the finish; he had an artistic interest in the labour of his hands; and he was obliged to use his brains in his work. The Birmingham of 1750 was guiltless of factories and chimneys; it knew of no machinery save the simplest tools of handicraft and agriculture; its industry was mainly conducted by the families in their own homes; and it was almost isolated by lack of newspapers, postal service, telegraphs, telephones, railways, or even decent roads, from the rest of the world.

Meanwhile, in the garret in a house upon the outskirts of this peaceful, mediæval town, the invention was being brought to perfection, which, perhaps more than any

[1] "England's Gazeteer," published *circa* 1750.

other single event, was destined to change the face of the whole world. In the year 1769—the year which saw also the birth both of Napoleon and Wellington—James Watt took out his patent for the steam-engine. Supported by the capital and the business enterprise of Boulton, he was enabled to make his invention of practical service within the next decade; and in 1785 the first engine for a cotton-mill was turned out of the famous Soho factory at Handsworth.

This invention, supplemented by a host of others, revolutionised the whole condition of industrial and social life. Machinery made possible production on a wholesale scale; it divided the world into two classes, those who owned machinery and those who operated it; it broke up the old family method of production, and massed together the operatives in factories where the costly machinery was situated; men and women were forced to live near the factory on which their livelihood depended, and this produced the modern over-populated town; the old skilled handicraft was superseded by a method of production in which each person specialised upon a single process; and steam and electricity swiftly brought all parts of the world into the closest contact.

In the space of a hundred and fifty years the number of people in Birmingham has increased fortyfold, and Greater Birmingham now holds a population approaching one million. The beautiful country in which it was situated has been transfigured into the Black Country. And the town itself, instead of being almost isolated and self-sufficing, has come into the most intimate industrial relationships with the whole world. To quote a modern writer :—

"We cannot move without finding traces of the great hive of metal-makers—the veritable descendants of Tubal-Cain. At home or abroad, sleeping or waking, walking or riding, in a carriage or upon a railway or steamboat, we cannot escape reminiscences of Birmingham. She haunts

us from the cradle to the grave. She supplies us with the spoon that first brings our infant lips into acquaintance with 'pap'; she provides the dismal furniture which is affixed to our coffins. In her turn, Birmingham lays the whole world under contribution for her materials. For her smiths and metal-workers and jewellers, wherever Nature has deposited stores of useful metals, or has hidden glittering gems, there industrious miners are busily digging. Divers collect for her button-makers millions of rare and costly shells. For her, adventurous hunters rifle the buffalo of his wide-spreading horns, and the elephant of his ivory tusks. There is scarcely a product of any country or any climate that she does not gladly receive, and in return stamps with a richer value." [1]

The point of this quotation—for our purpose—is its emphasis upon the world-wide extent of the market for which Birmingham supplies its goods. Production on a large scale makes specialisation possible, and, in fact, makes it inevitable; moreover, *it leads to the use of machinery* wherever its introduction becomes profitable. Humanity to-day needs great numbers of things of a uniform pattern; and, generally speaking, it wants cheap and serviceable articles and not those that are costly and beautiful. Now a demand of this nature facilitates large-scale production, and it is found most economical to subdivide processes to the greatest possible extent. Each person then does a single operation, and so acquires a dexterity and speed that would be impossible were he doing many different tasks. But if it is merely an operation that has to be performed over and over again in the same way, it is inevitable that sooner or later it will be taken out of the hands of a human being and put into the powers of a machine. Machinery makes possible an accuracy, a uniformity, and a delicacy far beyond the reach of manual labour, and of the utmost importance in civilised life. And it brings things within reach of all classes, which, not much more than a century

[1] See *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Ninth Edition, Vol. XIII. p. 785.

ago, would have been considered luxuries by the rich.

To take the classical illustration of the simple and necessary article called a pin. Adam Smith reckoned that one person by himself could not "have made twenty, perhaps not one a pin a day," but he says that ten persons working in association and only "indifferently accommodated with the necessary machinery" could make "upwards of 48,000 pins in a day." A few hundred persons using automatic machinery now produce in Birmingham every day about 35,000,000 pins. A further illustration of the economy and advantage of machinery may be found in the pen industry. In the early years of the century a very bad pen cost about 1s. 6*d*. Now, for the fraction of a farthing, one can buy a pen infinitely superior to anything handicraft could produce; and it is estimated that Birmingham produces every week some 30,000,000 of these, including no fewer than 100,000 different varieties.

These miracles of production, upon which our existing civilisation is reared, depend upon machinery and specialisation of industry. Unless we are prepared to abolish civilisation it is idle to talk of abolishing machinery. And even if we are prepared to abolish civilisation, as some are, we have to realise that an overwhelming majority of the civilised world's inhabitants are *not*; and that so long as these remain unconverted, there is every prospect that machinery will play an increasingly important rôle in the years ahead of us. And it will do so, not because wicked capitalists see in it an instrument of oppression and profit; nor merely because commercial exigencies and the competitive system force it upon us; but because it is the cheap, obvious, and rational method of satisfying a large proportion of the material needs of existence.

Present-day Machine Production calls for Cheap Unskilled Labour.

In its present stage this method of large-scale machine production has the immediate effect of reducing the bulk of adult labour to unskilled work. It is questionable if so much as one-fourth of the manual labour of Birmingham can be dignified by the name of "skilled." Many of the operations performed in the factories can be picked up even in a few days; others require not more than a few months. Such employments as require years of laborious learning are few, and are diminishing in number.

We must remember, further, that scientists and inventors are busy all over the world making fresh discoveries and introducing further mechanical developments. The miraculous invention of to-day is superseded to-morrow. The methods of production are incessantly changing, and perhaps a "trade" will not even be in existence by the time the seven years required for apprenticeship are spent.

Add to these considerations the fact that large-scale production under present conditions is dependent on a variety of circumstances, many of them beyond the control of the producer.

Cyclical, seasonal, and casual fluctuations of industry; the capricious ebb and flow of demand; the uncertainty of supply; are all factors that give the whole industrial world a kaleidoscopic character. It is small wonder that under these circumstances employers should abandon the attempt to keep apprenticeship alive, or that parents should find it beyond their powers to find for their lad a trade.

The remedy for this state of affairs cannot lie in the abolition of machinery. Such a step, even if it were practicable, would render the life of man, as Hobbes has described in another connection, "solitary, poor,

nasty, brutish, and short." The only practical remedy lies in the further development of machinery. We are still at the beginning of the inventive era, and there is no reason why machines of far greater complexity than those employed at present, should not relieve mankind of the bulk of monotonous and disagreeable labour now necessary. Such machines will probably require most highly skilled mechanics both for their construction and supervision; and it is no less an authority than Professor Marshall who states that "the more delicate the machine's power, the greater is the judgment and carefulness which is called for from those who see after it." [1]

Existing economic conditions, unfortunately, make this thoroughgoing use of highly complicated automatic machines a slow development. The business man, whether he be a small, independent manufacturer or a manager securing dividends for a large company of shareholders, is forced to keep down his cost of production to the lowest possible point. His profits depend on the return he can get for his manufactures over and above the cost of producing them. And his survival as a business-manager depends on his success. It is only when prosperity brings fortune and benevolence, that the employer can afford to be philanthropic.

Generally speaking, it is axiomatic in business that cost of production must be kept at a minimum. This involves the use of the cheapest possible labour, whether it be machines, boys, or females.

The Employment of Boys to Supplement the Inadequate Development of Machinery.

The main clue to the Boy Problem on its industrial side seems to be that employers, urged by the pressure

[1] Alfred Marshall, "Principles of Economics," Book II. Chap. IX. s. 4.

of circumstances, *use too little and too antiquated machinery and supplement its deficiency by cheap human labour.* Striving for an immediate return, the business man finds this his best policy. "In almost every trade," says Professor Alfred Marshall, "many things are done by hand, though it is well known that they could easily be done by some adaptations of machines already in use."[1] Mr. and Mrs. Webb, writing in "Industrial Democracy," make the following definite statement:—

> "Just as in a single trade the unregulated employer, who can get 'cheap labour,' is not eager to put in machinery, so in the nation, the enterprising capitalists, who exploit some new material or cater for some new desire, inevitably take the line of least resistance. If they can get the work done by parasitic labour they will have so much the less inducement to devise means of performing the same service with the aid of machinery and steam power, and so much the less interest in adopting mechanical inventions that are already open to them."

Mr. Cyril Jackson, in his "Report on Boy Labour," says:—"If we consider first the statistical evidence . . . we are immediately struck with the enormous proportion (between 70 and 80 per cent.) of boys entering unskilled occupations on leaving school." And he goes on to ask the pertinent question, if these occupations "only exist because there is a supply of cheap Boy Labour which saves the employers the trouble of providing in other ways the services rendered by boys."[3]

A very large amount of Boy Labour seems to be directly consequent upon the insufficient use of machinery. In the larger and better printing firms, to take an

[1] Alfred Marshall, "Economics of Industry," Book IV. Chap. IX.

[2] Sidney and Beatrice Webb, "Industrial Democracy," Part III. Chap. III. sec. (*d*).

[3] Cyril Jackson, "Report on Boy Labour," p. 4.

example, the machines are self-feeding and self-delivering. With the older machines, still commonly used, a boy or girl is occupied all day long in the soulless work of "laying on" or "taking off" the sheets.[1] The filthy job called "dogging up," which engages the labour of large numbers of boys in Birmingham, can now be done by a machine which dispenses with the boy entirely. The number of boys in the woollen and worsted industries of the north has been steadily diminishing in recent years as more efficient machines are being introduced;[2] the distributive work in which boys are so generally engaged could be very substantially reduced by the thoroughgoing employment of telephone, motor vehicle, and pneumatic-tube.[3] And even where machinery cannot replace boys, we must recollect that there is always under present conditions a surplus supply of *adult* male labour which could be utilised at a somewhat increased cost. But so long as boys are cheap, work will be done by them rather than by machines or men. As things are at present, a large proportion of the work of the world can be done as satisfactorily by boys or even girls as by adults. And so we find that in every great centre of industry there is an unsatisfied demand for Boy Labour.[4]

[1] See p. 195. [2] *Yorkshire Post*, December 19th, 1911.

[3] Note the interesting parallel case of the replacement of horse traffic by vehicles propelled by machinery. The old, cruel and cumbersome method of locomotion has only survived so long, because it has been cheaper to maintain the existing method and expensive to adopt the new.

[4] R. A. Bray ("Boy Labour and Apprenticeship," p. 70) says:—"Now there is no problem of unemployment in connection with boys and youths; the demand of employers for this kind of labour appears insatiable." This is unquestionably the case in the largest industrial centres like London, Glasgow, Birmingham, Manchester, etc., but it is not true of Bristol, Plymouth, York, and perhaps many other provincial towns. Conditions differ considerably from one locality to another. See also Majority Report of the Departmental Committee on the Employment of Children Act, 1903 (Cd. 5229), III. 2*a*; Cyril Jackson, "Apprenticeship," in the *Edinburgh Review*,

In Birmingham the following table [1] will indicate how great is the demand for Boy Labour in all forms of occupation :—

JUVENILE EMPLOYMENT EXCHANGE RETURN.

(The numbers refer to all boys from 14 to 17 years of age, placed in the period from June 1st, 1911 to October 31st, 1912.)

Occupation.	Vacancies Notified.	Vacancies Filled.
Telegraph Messengers	83	80
Art, Music	26	18
Hotel Service	151	104
Business Clerks	481	346
Van Boys, Stable Work, and Grooms	170	115
Warehouse	384	235
Messengers and Porters	581	434
Rolling-Mills	115	90
Tube Manufacture	42	34
Pattern-Makers	11	7
Iron Founders	47	18
Brass Founders	554	286
Blacksmiths	42	7
Engineering (General)	323	269
Polishers (Metal)	270	183
Drilling, Milling	374	302
Tool-Makers	149	119
Gun Manufacture	24	22
Wire-Drawers	25	14
Miscellaneous Metal-Workers	328	181
Motor-Car Manufacture	24	14
Cycle Manufacture	71	37
Carry forward	4275	2915

October 1912, p. 416 ; *Western Daily Mercury*, January 11th, 1913, Paper by Waldorf Astor, M.P. ; Handbook for Workers among Boys in Bristol ; S. Rowntree and B. Lasker, "Unemployment," Chap. I.

[1] It is true that the Labour Exchange only deals with an unknown fraction of Boy Labour ; but this consideration in no way invalidates the suggestiveness of this table. The demand of employers for boys is obviously overwhelming.

Occupation.	Vacancies Notified.	Vacancies Filled.
Brought forward . .	4275	2915
Goldsmiths, Silversmiths, and Jewellers	383	168
Electrical Apparatus Makers .	40	29
Carpenters and Joiners . .	143	76
Painters and Decorators . .	55	20
Plumbers and Gasfitters . .	139	49
Cabinet-Makers . . .	45	23
Upholsterers	26	9
Woodcarvers and Engravers .	19	11
Other Workers in Wood . .	29	11
Glass Manufacture . . .	75	43
Soap Manufacture . . .	21	18
Rubber Workers . . .	33	23
Leather Goods Workers . .	28	11
Printers and Bookbinders . .	175	92
Tailors	22	7
Bootmakers	23	8
Bakers and Biscuit Manufacture .	33	16
Greengrocers	27	8
Cocoa and Chocolate Manufacture	151	150
Butchers	25	9
Brewers	28	19
Electrical Engineering . .	62	48
Labourers	239	122
Miscellaneous Employments .	175	80
Total . . .	6271	3965

The Pressure of the Home upon the Boy to Earn Money.

No statistics exist to enable us to compute accurately the amount of poverty existing in Birmingham. We have not even any figures which tell us what are the wages earned by the masses of workers in the city. We are, therefore, driven to accept general estimates.

Mr. Rowntree made an investigation ten years ago in York to discover to what extent poverty existed in

that city.[1] He attempted to find out what percentage of the population received wages insufficient to maintain themselves and those economically dependent upon them in a state of *mere physical efficiency*. It is important to explain in his own words what "merely physical efficiency" means.

"A family living upon the scale allowed for in this estimate must never spend a penny on railway fare or omnibus. They must never go into the country unless they walk. They must never purchase a halfpenny newspaper or spend a penny to buy a ticket for a popular concert. They must write no letters to absent children, for they cannot afford to pay the postage. They must never contribute anything to their church or chapel or give any help to a neighbour which costs them money. They cannot save, nor can they join Sick Club or Trade Union, because they cannot pay the necessary subscriptions. The children must have no pocket-money for dolls, marbles or sweets. The father must smoke no tobacco and must drink no beer. The mother must never buy any pretty clothes for herself or for her children, the character of the family wardrobe, as of the family diet, being governed by the regulation 'Nothing must be bought but that which is absolutely necessary for the maintenance of physical health, and what is bought must be of the plainest and most economical description.' Should a child fall ill, it must be attended by the parish doctor; should it die, it must be buried by the parish. Finally the wage-earner must never be absent from his work a single day.

"If any of these conditions are broken, the extra expenditure involved is met, *and can only be met*, by limiting the diet, or, in other words, by sacrificing physical efficiency."[2]

Mr. Rowntree estimated that the lowest wage upon which a family of five could *even theoretically* be maintained in mere physical efficiency was 21*s*. 8*d*. in York. Allowing for inevitable ignorance and wastefulness of expenditure, the lowest wage which would keep a family above the Poverty-Line would be a few shillings more than this.[3]

[1] Seebohm Rowntree, "Poverty."
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 133.
[3] *Ibid.*, Chap. IV.

Upon this basis, Mr. Rowntree believed that in York 27·48 per cent. of the population (including all unskilled workers) were receiving wages insufficient to maintain bare physical efficiency.[1]

Mr. Charles Booth made the percentage for London 30·7, and in a letter to Mr. Rowntree he remarks :—" I have, indeed, long thought that other cities, if similarly tested, would show a percentage of poverty not differing greatly from that existing in London. Your most valuable inquiry confirms me in this opinion." [2]

The most recent authoritative estimate of wages for the whole of the United Kingdom was made by Mr. Sidney Webb for the year 1912.[3] He estimates that 4 per cent. of the total of adult male wage-earners secure under 15*s.* per week, another 8 per cent. under 20*s.*, another 20 per cent. under 25*s.* This makes 32 per cent., almost exactly one-third of the workers, who, according to previous calculations, are definitely suffering poverty. Another 21 per cent. of the workers are estimated to earn on the average 27*s.* 6*d.* per week only, and many of these must be reckoned as also suffering poverty, either continuously or at intervals.

Assuming Birmingham to reproduce roughly the conditions found to be prevalent elsewhere, we shall probably not be far wrong in estimating that in quite one-half of the homes of the city there is urgent pressure upon the children to help supply the material deficiencies of the home.

We have, further, to recognise that, after the age of about 25, the wages of the ordinary unskilled workman remain stationary or rise very slightly. But his growing family is an increasing burden. This means that the pressure on the child of 14 to earn money for the home is very strong indeed; and it is, in fact, the earnings of the

[1] Seebohm Rowntree's "Poverty," p. 133. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 300.
[3] "The New Statesman," Vol. I. pp. 141, 142. Cf. also Professor Bowley's calculation, which is almost identical.

children that incline the "Poverty Curve" upwards again after it has suffered a depression for ten or fifteen years.[1]

This unfortunate condition, intensifying the poverty of the working-class home while the boy is at school, makes it almost inevitable that the parents should press him for as immediate and substantial an income as he can secure on leaving.[2]

"Even when the parents choose a boy's employment they also decide for immediate earnings, and not opportunities for training."[3] Many instances of this have come before my notice. A head-teacher told me of one boy whose skill in modelling rose to something approaching genius. Two managers of a prominent jewellery firm came down to the school, saw his work, and offered him the prospect of apprenticeship and certain advancement. His parents sent him off as an errand-boy for an extra shilling a week.

Here are the notes made by a prominent worker among boys in Birmingham of a similar case :—

"Instance of an exceptionally clever boy who wanted to go in for dye-sinking. While yet at school he was helped to attend special classes. Then just because there was no vacancy on the day he left, he immediately went to a job stamping, entirely unskilled, and without slightest prospects. After a lot of persuasion, including a whole Sunday afternoon's visit to parents, got the boy to chuck this job and enter the first vacancy in the trade selected for him. Typical of many other cases."

In these and a large number of other cases, boys who might have got into jobs with a prospect, are turned

[1] Seebohm Rowntree's "Poverty," p. 137.

[2] It is of course poverty that is the main cause also of employment out of school hours. I understand that the recent investigation of the Central Care Committee in Birmingham into this question (not yet published) shows that the earnings of the children are so small as to afford little relief to the household.

[3] R. A. Bray (Evidence before the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws), 96315 in Vol. IX.

carelessly into unskilled work. It is just at this point that the Care Committee helper and the Juvenile Labour Exchange can render their most effective service to the lad. They can, of course, only get lads into suitable positions ; they cannot, except very indirectly, increase the quantity of good employment for boys. The parents left to themselves will in most cases send the boy, or rather, let the boy take himself, into whatever job secures the largest immediate income. This is in the main because of their poverty and their apathy to the boy's interests.

I made the most careful inquiries on this point in every case, and I doubt if one-sixth of all the parents I questioned had helped their boy into a job or took any real interest in what he was doing. " We never worried." " I never troubled about it ; I thought they could all find their own." Many parents even pique themselves on their boy's ability to shift for himself. One mother said to me with pride : " 'E's always been a good lad and found all 'is jobs for 'imself. 'E never gave me no trouble over that." Parental interest rarely rises even to the negative service of keeping the boy out of some job thought to be harmful. And even supposing the parents to be awake to the boy's life-interests, they find it quite impossible to know what to do. Premiums beyond their means bar the way to many skilled trades. The unskilled worker has no influence with a firm offering educative employment. The industrial world is so uncertain and so complex that even those best acquainted with industrial conditions would find it difficult to advise what to do with a boy. The lad himself often has no distinctive aptitude or inclinations at 14. He often prefers unskilled work. He is, moreover, resentful of parental discipline. And beneath all these difficulties is the fundamental one that the work open to boys and men is most of it unskilled work. Several rather better-class working-men have expressed their perplexity to me

in different ways. "We didn't know what to put him to. We thought we'd let him tackle two or three jobs, and then see what suited him." "I tried to get him to learn a trade, but gave it up. Employers don't help you." In two or three cases the parents have struggled hard to get the boy into an educative job, but have found it impossible. The boy fails them; or the employer is unsatisfactory; or the apparent trade turns out to be a low-paid mechanical occupation. It is small wonder that the parents, as a rule, abandon all attempt to steer their lads, and merely content themselves with taking the earnings.

The Compliance of the Boy with the Demands of Parent and Employer.

In ready response to the insatiable demands of industry, a stream of boys, ready for any sort of work that offers, is perpetually pouring out of the Elementary Schools. As we have already seen in the chapter on the School, these boys have been trained in the habits of obedience, regularity, and industry. For the work that is required of them in most cases they require no particular skill and no great ability or knowledge. The school, in fact, has given them more than enough training to satisfy the all too moderate demands which industrial conditions make upon them.

The employer wants cheap labour. The parents want money. Compliant to the pressure exerted upon him, the boy readily sells his labour to the employer and takes home his earnings. His acceptance even of work that will be ruinous of all his future prospects, is not surprising, if we recall the facts recorded of the boy in the chapter on Adolescence. At the age of 14, Nature is suggesting to him very strongly that he should be a man, but she has not provided him with a man's reason or a man's self-control. He is more plastic to outside

pressure than at any other time of his life since early childhood. School has just lifted its discipline from his shoulders. He is too much occupied with tasting the immediate excitement and interest of life to be careful of such remote issues as his industrial future and his responsibilities as a husband or citizen. The employer offers him high wages for inferior work, a portion of which will suffice him for many hitherto little-tasted pleasures. His parents leave only one commandment, "Bring home more money," ringing in his ears. He does not know, as yet, what work he is fond of or where his capacities lie; and what ambitions he has smack of criminal investigation, killing Indians or prize-fighting, rather than of anything more solid and possible. In most cases, moreover, he positively prefers easy, unintelligent employment to the work of learning a trade. Thus he leaves school the moment the law allows him, and goes at once into the first place where he sees a notice, "Boy wanted." In some cases the father or a pal found the job, but in nearly all of those investigated the boy "saw it as he was walking along the street," and there was no gap even of so much as two or three days between school and work.[1]

"That which should be a matter of careful and definite contract is the most casual of all the transactions of the business world." [2]

It is true that the skilled artisan can often make a better bargain for his son than this; and that the State

[1] A. S. Rowntree and B. Lasker, in their work on Unemployment, suggest the gap between school and work as one source of deterioration in the lives of many lads in York. Speaking of the 114 unemployed juveniles they investigated, they remarked:—"First, we note that there has frequently been a considerable interval between leaving school and beginning work—an interval spent in 'larking about' in the streets." York seems to be somewhat peculiar in this respect. In Birmingham I have received unanimous evidence that there is no such interval. Such an interval would tend to occur where employment for lads is insufficient, as it is in York (see p. 168).

[2] S. J. Gibb, "The Boy and his Work," p. 8.

and the Voluntary Helper are coming to the assistance of the boy at the commencement of his career; but these developments must not blind us to the fact that, things being as they are, no amount of *guidance* will abolish the mass of well-paid uneducative occupations at present open to boys, into which the majority of them must enter.

Thus the requirements of the employer, the parent and the boy all adjust themselves to one another with an almost diabolical nicety. The immediate interests of them all are served by the entry of the boy into low-skilled, well-paid employment. And to establish the public interest over all these three inter-related factors that conspire against it, is a task demanding strength and skill altogether beyond that of any existing public or private agencies.

Boy Labour, mostly Unskilled.

Let us next consider what are the actual industrial possibilities open to boys in Birmingham. These are difficult to estimate in any quantitative fashion; because so far no general statistics have been accumulated and because the host of small employers and different trades in the city make a general survey very difficult. If we omit the textile industries, we find that practically every other manufacture has a home in Birmingham. Boys distribute themselves generally over the whole industrial field, as may be seen by a glance at the returns from the Juvenile Labour Exchange or from those of the recent Census.[1]

[1] The detailed Census returns make an important innovation this time in giving the numbers engaged in each form of juvenile employment for each separate year between childhood and manhood. Unfortunately these figures are not being published in time for me to incorporate them in my work; and although I have a full copy of them in my possession, the Authorities will not permit me to publish in anticipation of the official sheets.

It is important for our purpose to get some clearer insight into the meaning of the elegant terms employed by the Census Authorities and the Board of Trade in the designation of juvenile employments. How much of the work can be regarded as educative? What proportion of it is skilled? Now it is true, as has been noted, that no hard lines of differentiation separate skilled from unskilled work, and that skilled work shades off into unskilled by gradations as imperceptible as those that transform summer into autumn. In one factory I visited there were no fewer than forty different kinds of wheels for polishing; the roughest sort of polishing (called "buffing") is quite unskilled labour; other kinds require considerable delicacy and dexterity. For the purpose of this chapter, however, we can sufficiently mark off "skilled" and "unskilled" work by making use of the definitions already quoted: [1]—

"*Skilled* work or a trade is any manual industrial occupation or process the performance of which requires that the workman shall have had a definite training extending over a term of years."

"*Unskilled* work is any manual operation or process the performance of which requires that the workman shall possess some degree of strength, dexterity and knowledge, which may be obtained by practice and without a definite training (apart from an elementary education)." [2]

If we accept these definitions, we are obliged to confess that those occupations which can be truly called "skilled," or in which apprenticeship is possible, are exceedingly few in number.

Nothing could be more explicit upon this point than the recent Report of the Commercial Education Committee of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce on the

[1] Introduction, p. 10.

[2] Professor E. J. Urwick, Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws, Appendix, Vol. IX. p. 349.

question of " the revivification of the system of apprenticeship." Sir George Kenrick (Chairman of the City of Birmingham Education Committee) stated :—

" As far as I know, there is no reason why the apprenticeship system should not be continued or revived for handicrafts ; but as these form so small a portion of our national industries the point is hardly worth consideration."

Mr. J. S. Taylor remarked :—

" In a few trades only is it possible to take apprentices now ; owing to the large scale of production, the subdivision of labour has been carried to a minute degree and automatic and semi-automatic machines are installed in most industries ; the worker being now a specialist in the reproduction of a few articles on machines devised for their rapid and economical production."

Mr. R. H. Best said :—

" Specialised occupations are the essential characteristics of factories."

Mr. Alfred Hayes, Principal of the Birmingham and Midland Institute, is quoted in this same Report. He remarks :—

" My opinion is that the substitution of machine work for handicraft, a minute and rigid subdivision of mechanical processes, the amalgamation of small into large manufactures, and these into large syndicates, are tendencies inherent in modern industrial life which cannot be resisted, and which will almost certainly increase from year to year. The effect of the above tendencies on the minds and characters of the workmen are admittedly deplorable."

In a paper officially prepared for Care Committee Helpers by the Birmingham Education Committee, we are told :—

" The question of unskilled work, *i.e.* work requiring the minimum of judgment and only the dexterity that is a matter of practice, is a very difficult one. There is a vast amount of

such work in Birmingham, and it is likely to increase with the constant improvement of machinery." [1]

It seems probable that an overwhelming majority of the great army of boys employed in the various workshops of the city are doing work that requires a minimum of skill.[2] It is work, that is to say, that can be learnt in a few days or a few months; much of it can be learnt even in a few hours. Time after time I asked lads how long it would take me to learn the job they were doing, and the usual answers were "half a day" or "a few days" or "a few weeks." Rarely did the answer come that as long as a few months were necessary. The fact that boys can go, as they do, from job to job, is in itself a most convincing proof that their work can be "picked up" almost immediately. Employers would not take in boys for four or five or even ten or twelve months if any considerable portion of their time were required for learning. This nomadic tendency, moreover, is characteristic of the bulk of Boy Labour in the town. And, it should be added further, the boys that I investigated had jobs just as frequently with large firms as with smaller ones.

We may conclude in words which Mr. R. Blair, Education Officer of the London County Council, used in speaking of the Metropolis :—"Only about one-third of the children leaving the Elementary Schools enter a form of occupation which can, by any stretch of imagination, be called skilled." [3] And the employer's state of mind is pretty

[1] "Information concerning Certain Trades for Women and Girls."

[2] It is interesting to note that seventy years ago the same evil had revealed itself. "It was said that at Birmingham children employed in the metal trade were taught only one particular branch, so that when grown up they find a difficulty in procuring profitable work." H.C., 1843, Appendix to second Report, Part I. p. F. 18; quoted in Jocelyn Dunlop and R. D. Denman's "English Apprenticeship and Child Labour," p. 300.

[3] L.C.C. Report on Technical Education and Continuation Schools, December 1912, p. 104.

well summed up in the remark made to me by one who has been both worker and employer himself :—" The best thing you can do is to put a boy on a machine and get all you can out of him." [1]

The Nature of Boy Occupations.

Leaving out of consideration the skilled trades and the clerical profession, which are not within the purview of this inquiry, let us examine the different unskilled occupations open to boys.

Of the employments recorded in my investigation there are four main kinds :—1. Errands. 2. Labouring work in factories, etc. 3. Jobs connected with a machine in a factory. 4. Van-boy labour.

The evils of each one of these occupations have been described with varying degrees of emphasis by different writers. 1. The Errand-boy, living mainly upon the streets, is open to a good many of the temptations of the street-trader ; [2] his work is of a casual, non-disciplinary nature, requiring even less intelligence than that of a factory lad ; on the other hand, it is unduly severe upon his body, both on account of the excessive loads he has to carry or draw, and because of the very long hours he is required to work.

It is good for him to " be in the open air," but the

[1] Cf. Mr. R. H. Tawney's Memorandum to the Report of the Consultative Committee on Attendance at Continuation Schools, 1909 (Cd. 4757). Vol. I. " In the words of an employer," boys " are employed for their ' present commercial utility.' "

[2] Street-trading is not considered, because it falls outside the scope of this investigation. Scarcely any of the boys interviewed made any considerable acquaintance with street-trading, though several were occupied in it at school ; the injury caused by street-trading to the physique and morals of those engaged in it are too well known to need further specification. As regards Birmingham, they are well put forth in the Report of the Committee appointed by the Bishop of Birmingham to inquire into Street-Trading and in a paper by Rev. H. S. Pelham, " Street-Trading by Children." The number of children licensed is decreasing steadily, and is now under 1,849 (September 1913).

"open air" includes a great deal of weather exceedingly injurious to the lad's physique.

I found that the mothers of boys objected as vigorously to errand-boy work ("out in all winds and weathers," and "wearing the boots off his feet") as they did even to "dogging-up" (when the boy comes home "full o' graice" and "drownded in oil").

2. The Boy who is a General Labourer usually assists men or other boys in their work. The jewellery trade in Birmingham uses an immense amount of mere boy labour. Warehouses and shops employ many such lads. Fathers who are themselves general labourers often take their sons with them. As a rule the boy learns little or nothing; and indeed, "general labour" is specifically unskilled, if not casual work.

3. Such labour is, however, less monotonous than that of the low-skilled Factory Boy, who performs some operation, time after time, in connection with a machine. "At best a boy obtains by practical experience a certain skill in one branch of trade. At worst, he is put to purely mechanical work, for which little or no skill or thought is required, and under the monotony of which his faculties, moral no less than mental, often fail to develop." [1]

4. Van-Boy Labour engages the services of a considerable number of boys in Birmingham, as in all the largest industrial areas.[2] This phase of the problem has recently been investigated by a Departmental Committee. By the deputation which called for the inquiry, "Attention was drawn to the hours worked by boys

[1] Report of the Consultative Committee, Vol. I. p. 34. Cf. also Rev. J. Spencer Gibb, "The Boy and his Work," p. 10:—"At best the boy, if he enters a workshop or factory, may master the operation of one department; at the worst, he will become a casual labourer or the human complement of a machine that just fails of regulative intelligence."

[2] Report of the Departmental Committee on the Hours and Conditions of Employment of Van-Boys and Warehouse Boys (Cd. 6886), 1913, p. 25.

in certain callings not yet regulated by any Act of Parliament, and in particular van-boys. These hours were alleged to be excessive and to produce certain evil effects, such as defective physique and a general recklessness of character, and to seriously interfere with the boy's chances for self-improvement or educational advancement, and to tend towards unemployment at the age of 19."[1] The inquiry would appear to have confirmed to a large extent the truth of these allegations; but in this case especially is it true, as with all Boy Labour, that the evils of the occupation lie in the conditions of employment (excessive hours, etc.), as well as in the casual nature of the work.

While it seems probable that machinery will in the future effect great economies in human labour and in many directions create a demand for very highly skilled workmen, we have to accept the fact that for the present the mass of industrial occupations must be low-skilled. It would seem chimerical to hope that in the near future boys or men can be educated or elevated *through* their labour as to some extent they were in the days of handicraft. But while this is true we must not blind ourselves to the fact that even "unskilled" work makes some demand upon mind and character, and may be done badly or well according to the response in the human agent. Your errand-boy can be alert, diligent and careful, or he can be sluggish, indolent and heedless. The boy on a machine can be quick and attentive, or slow and careless. Employers have told me that the differences between boys even in the performance of the merest operations (such as getting an edge on a tin) are very considerable. And then, of course, all work, however low-skilled, may serve to create habits of honesty, obedience, regularity,

[1] Report of the Departmental Committee on the Hours and Conditions of Employment of Van-Boys and Warehouse Boys (Cd. 6886), 1913, p. 4.

and punctuality. It is admittedly unfortunate that the work itself does not make larger demands upon the brains and characters of those who participate in it, but it would seem that the real evils do not lie so much in this inevitable thing as in certain other avoidable factors connected with it.

The Evils of Boy Labour in the Conditions of Employment rather than in the Work itself.

The capitalist-employer has no more original sin in him than the rest of us, but the prevalent industrial conditions seem to force him into a business policy that inflicts the most serious wrong upon the on-coming generation. He finds boys in these unstable years of adolescence irresponsible, ill-educated, and largely undependable; he knows that it is useless, even if it were possible, to try to train them; he is subject to the severest pressure in the world of business to keep down costs and keep up profits; and he has his own wife and children to consider. Hence, the reiterated verdict of investigators that "the great majority of employers are still indifferent to the needs of the young persons in their employment." [1]

The evils resultant upon this apathy are aggravated in Birmingham by reason of the immense numbers of small employers. There are, indeed, hundreds of firms that "consist of two men and a boy." There is a considerable amount of "sub-contracting" — letting the work out to a "gaffer," who finds the labour and regulates the conditions of employment. A large and prosperous firm, able to resist the pressure the smaller man feels for an immediate profit, using the most up-to-date appliances, and living pretty much in the public eye, tends to make conditions good for its workpeople. But the less successful business-men and especially

[1] Report of the Consultative Committee to the Board of Education, Vol. I., p. 96. See also p. 128.

the "gaffers" who undertake sub-contracting, living, as economists would say, "on the margin," approximate far more to the irresponsible employers of the pre-Factory-Acts period. Such employers engage immense numbers of boys for the lowest-skilled work, because boys are very cheap; and the conditions of employment which they offer are of the poorest.

To the boy-workers three evils result from the apathy or poverty of employers (quite apart from those implicit in the work itself).

These are:—

1. Excessive Hours of Labour;
2. Lack of Physical Development;
3. Harmful Moral Influences.

Each of them varies from work-place to work-place according to the conditions made by the employer.

Excessive Hours of Labour.

The hours of work for juveniles are regulated by law only in factories and workshops and in shops. The Factory and Workshops Act makes it illegal to employ a "young person" in a non-textile factory for more than twelve hours a day, including one and a half hours for meals.[1] The report of an inquiry made for the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education states that the usual hours in Birmingham are from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.—"one hour for dinner, tea taken without ceasing work."[2] A working day of at least ten hours is usual for the factory-boy; and probably in many cases the legal limit is exceeded. The Shops Acts, 1912 and 1913, make 74 hours per week (including meal-times) the legal maximum for young persons working in shops.[3] Unfortunately these regulations do

[1] Factory and Workshops Act, 1901, sec. 24.
[2] Report of the Consultative Committee, Appendix M., p. 292.
[3] Memorandum issued by the Home Office on the Law Relating to Shops, p. 12.

not apply to "errand-boys, carmen, and others mainly engaged in delivering goods and going round for orders," since these are not technically shop-assistants. With the exception of these regulations, boys may be employed without legal limit to their hours of work; and many errand-boys, van-boys, pages, etc., are kept at work from early in the morning till late at night—not infrequently till eleven or twelve o'clock.[1]

Thus the minimum working-day of a boy, including his meals and his journeys to and from work, is a good twelve hours. In many cases it is extended to fourteen or fifteen hours a day.

Lack of Physical Development.

Largely conditioned by the Excessive Hours of Labour is the second evil incidental to present industrial conditions—the Lack of Physical Development provided for boys during the years of adolescence. There are, of course, numerous (and generally remediable) causes of actual physical injury to boys in many occupations. The brass trades—in which sub-contracting is very common—employ large numbers of boys and are notoriously unhealthy.[2] Many work-places are still positively detrimental to the health of the workpeople engaged in them. "Work-places vary greatly in Birmingham, ranging from the most up-to-date to the most antiquated. There are some modern factories under the most improved conditions, but, side by side with these, still exist old structures, ill adapted for their purpose, and containing a maximum of dirt with a minimum of air."[3] But, even apart from

[1] Cf. Report of the Departmental Committee on the Hours and Conditions of Employment of Van-Boys and Warehouse-Boys, 1913, pp. 6 and 12.

[2] Report on Industrial and Sanitary Conditions, Appendix Vol. XVI. to the Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws, pp. 139 and 144.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 139. See also Report of Medical Officer of Health for Birmingham, 1911, pp. 80 and 82.

these injurious influences, we must realise that the work which boys do is of a kind that rarely exercises the whole body; often it exercises merely a few of the smaller ancillary muscles. Yet it is during this period that Nature offers her greatest opportunity to the lad for physical development; it is at this time that he stands in most need of healthy exercise which will enlarge and toughen every muscle of his body. It seems probable that the great majority of the boys of this country are entering manhood physically undeveloped and unfit because of the impossibility of getting proper bodily exercise during this period.[1]

Harmful Moral Influences.

The third evil incidental to Boy Labour at the present time, and again in no way inherent in the work itself, is the Harmful Moral Influence to which he is subject in very many work-places. He leaves school at the most critical moment of his moral growth; and at once exchanges the atmosphere of the schoolroom for that of the work-place. Instead of a school teacher concerned only for his welfare, and school chums in whom the leaven of education is at work, he is now in charge of an employer or foreman, and his associates are men or youths older than himself. If the employer is concerned for the welfare of his workpeople, or if the foreman is the right sort of man, he can "stamp his personality all over the factory," and greatly assist the moral education of the boy. But in many factories, perhaps in most, the

[1] Cf. the Report of the Committee on Physical Deterioration, p. 72. "The Committee are impressed with the conviction that the period of adolescence is responsible for much waste of human material, and for the entrance upon maturity of permanently damaged and ineffective persons of both sexes. The plasticity of the physical organisation, the power it possesses of yielding rapidly towards degenerative or recuperative influences, appears to terminate at 18." Cf. also Chapter VI., on Adolescence, p. 96 *et seq.*

moral atmosphere is not at all such as will improve the boy. He not only hears continually the unsavoury language and ideas of the older youths and men, but he almost inevitably picks up habits of gambling, drinking, and so forth. There is not the slightest doubt that the association of the boy at this impressionable period with older boys and men is in many cases almost fatal to self-respect and clean living. Many working-men, engaged in various occupations in Birmingham, have urged this evil upon me.

Change of Jobs.

The deterioration to which the boy is subjected by the industrial conditions already noticed, becomes further intensified by the nomadic character of his jobs. He is "everything by turns, and nothing long," and in Birmingham, at any rate, he changes his occupation almost as freely as he changes his job.[1] This Change of Jobs is a feature of the problem which has hitherto received insufficient attention, and which it was a special point of this investigation to examine. It is interesting to note that the difficulty is an old one, and that even three-quarters of a century ago it was said of the Birmingham boys that many of them "will not become regular apprentices, because they like to go from place to place."[2] At the present time, the habit of shifting is so common among lads, that it must be called characteristic of almost all but the highest grades of Boy Labour. The authorities at the Birmingham Juvenile Labour Exchange reckon that every boy has two or three jobs at least before he reaches 18; and all the information I have accumulated confirms this statement.

Mr. N. G. Chamberlain and Mr. E. V. Birchall collected statistics concerning the careers of a miscellaneous sample

[1] See footnote on p. 193.

[2] Reports, H.C., 1842, XIV. p. 27. Quoted in J. Dunlop and R. D. Denman, "English Apprenticeship and Child Labour," p. 305.

of 147 Birmingham youths for the recent Poor Laws Commission. In generalising on their results the investigators state :—" A prominent feature of these figures in regard to boy labour is the extraordinarily varied character of the average boy's early industrial career. There seems to be no doubt that during times of good employment boys and young men drift about from shop to shop, and even from trade to trade, to an extraordinary degree." [1]

The tendency of the boy to migrate from one job to another is not confined to Birmingham. It appears, with features varying according to local conditions, in every large centre of population. It was noted by both the Majority [2] and the Minority [3] Reports of the recent Royal Commission on the Poor Laws. Mr. Cyril Jackson, who was specially appointed by the Commission to investigate the problem of Boy Labour, speaking on the authority of evidence collected from all parts of the country, refers to " the restlessness among boys in passing from job to job, which almost every one with experience in the matter has noticed." [4] Mr. Frederic Keeling stated at a recent Conference on Juvenile Employment that " he believed, as a matter of fact, that if they took the whole of the children in the country above the Elementary School age up to the age of 17, they would find that on the average they changed their employment at least once a year." [5] Mr. Bray in his recent work

[1] Report of the Poor Laws Commission, Appendix, Vol. XX. on Boy Labour; Appendix VI., Memorandum from Mr. N. G. Chamberlain and Mr. E. V. Birchall, p. 177 (117).

The forthcoming detailed Census Returns for Birmingham show this point to a certain extent, but of course wholesale figures mask individual movements. Mr. Egbert Jackson, whose book on Boy Labour will be published in a few months, found the same tendency to movement as I have done, but he is not inclined to think it so serious an evil.

[2] Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws, Majority Report, Part VI. Chap. I. s. 138.

[3] *Ibid.*, Minority Report, Chap. IV. E. III.

[4] *Ibid.*, Appendix, Vol. XX. p. 26.

[5] Report of Proceedings of National Conference on the Prevention of Destitution, 1911, p. 267.

declares that "All persons who have any knowledge of the subject agree that the boys repeatedly move in an almost aimless fashion from one situation to another." [1]

In Birmingham, where the demand for boy labour is greatly in excess of the supply, there is scarcely any unemployment between one job and another. In York, Bristol, and other towns where industry cannot so readily absorb boys, the evil of periods of unemployment between the jobs, and between leaving school and the first job, becomes a normal feature of the boy's career, and is productive of serious injury to his physique and character.[2]

But in the greater towns, and especially in Birmingham, there are practically no spells of unemployment between one job and another. I made particular inquiries on this point from the boys I investigated, and in almost every case two days were the maximum period of unemployment. Generally speaking, the evil is not in the least the lack of employment for boys, but the superabundant supply of it.

The phenomenon of Change of Jobs is not puzzling if we keep in mind the three main factors in the situation: the Employer, the Parent, and the Boy. The employer needs unskilled labour, and the work he offers can be picked up almost on the day of the lad's arrival. The

[1] R. A. Bray, "Boy Labour and Apprenticeship," p. 142. See also on this point R. H. Tawney, "Economics of Boy Labour" (pp. 39 and 40) in "Problems of Boy Life and Labour," edited by J. H. Whitehouse; S. Rowntree and B. Lasker on "Unemployment," Chap. I.; Cyril Jackson on "Unemployment and Trade Unions," Chap. VI.; "Studies in Boy Life" (ed. E. J. Urwick), p. 111; Mary Flexner, "A Plea for Vocational Training," in the New York *Survey*; A. Greenwood's "Juvenile Labour Exchanges and After-Care," p. 7.

[2] See S. Rowntree and B. Lasker, "Unemployment," Chap. I. It would seem that these writers are unduly impressed with the evil of Boy *Unemployment*, and in consequence they lay the greatest emphasis on the need for Compulsory Schooling for Unemployed Juveniles. See also on this point Arthur Greenwood's "Juvenile Labour Exchanges and After-Care," *passim*.

parent is poor and presses the boy incessantly to bring home more money; where nor how the money is earned the parent does not know nor care. The boy is thoughtless and irresponsible, and feels no compunction to stay on at a job, but yields light-heartedly to any temptation to leave it.

The reason which boys usually gave me for changing their jobs was that they went "for more money" or "to better themselves." From the side of the home the only sort of demand that is made of the boy is that he shall bring home as much as possible. The boy in his ignorance sees no reason for sticking to a job at 5*s*. when there is another his pals know about at 6*s*. The poverty of the home is a thing that descends on good and bad boys alike, and has the same unfortunate consequences in each case. In fact, it is often the best boys who are most anxious to help their mothers, and therefore change the most readily for a better-paid place.

The employer, as we have seen, is prone to employ lads at uneducative work, and as cheaply as he can get them. There is no sort of bond or understanding between him and them. If trade is slack, the boys are turned off. In such seasonal trades as the cycle and motor industries, lads are habitually sacked in the slack months and then called for by the same firms when the busy period commences again. "There is said to be a strong demand for youths and boys at most periods in most trades, but they readily return to the cycle factories when work revives, since they can earn more money there."[1] Such firms, paying very high wages for their busy season, are to a large extent parasitic on other businesses. The manager of one of the largest and best engineering firms in Birmingham told me that the high wages offered for the season by the cycle and motor industries played havoc with their schemes for training their boys. In addition to such seasonal fluctuations of employment,

[1] "Seasonal Trades," edited by Sidney Webb and Arnold Freeman: "Paper on the Cycle Industry," by G. R. Carter, p. 138.

industry is, of course, subject to numberless casual fluctuations. In a town like Birmingham, with its host of small employers, there is a continual failure of small firms. Each such failure means the turning adrift of the boys employed and the disappointment of any hopes they may have formed of continuous employment. It is certain that the fluctuations of industry, quite apart from the character or capacity of the boys, must be held responsible for much of the drifting about. Under existing conditions, the employer accepts no responsibility whatever for the lads he employs, and they come and go merely in response to industrial pressure.

But for the more fundamental cause of the Change of Jobs we must turn back to the chapter on Adolescence. The boy throws off the discipline of the school at the very instant when he stands most in need of it. He goes out—or has gone until recently—into the industrial world without a thought of his future, and with no parental pressure upon him except to bring home money. He is irresponsible, light-hearted, and in a word—*boyish*. All the non-industrial features of his personality find encouragement, not merely in his recreations, but in the indifference of the home and of the industrial world to the career he makes for himself. There is no stimulus upon him to do his work well ; he is often aware that his job is one that leads nowhere. He knows that he can always find a job, and he is accordingly apathetic to the risks of losing his present occupation. He will readily cheek the foreman or have a fight with another boy, or lose his temper because " the gaffer shouts " at him ; or he will just " chuck himself out " of a job for the sheer love of change. Even when there is method in his madness, and he moves definitely in response to the money-stimulus, he is neglecting his future welfare because of his adolescent ignorance. At bottom, the Change of Jobs, which is one of the most important features of the whole problem of Boy Labour, is a matter of psychology.

In the case of a superior type of boy, with a personality robust enough to shape the circumstances of his own life, Change of Jobs may be nothing but the road to fortune. Emerson says sagely :—

"A sturdy lad from New Hampshire or Vermont, who in turn tries all the professions, who *teams it, farms it, peddles,* keeps a school, preaches, edits a newspaper, goes to Congress, buys a township, and so forth, in successive years, and always, like a cat, falls on his feet, is worth a hundred of these city dolls."

I have often heard the Changing of Jobs, which we are considering, defended in this same spirit, as a sign of healthy enterprise in the boy's nature. But in the actual fact there is no analogy between the two cases. The boy in a town changes with mean motives from one job to another ; he does not aim at improving his chances and he learns nothing by his vacillation ; in only one doubtful case did any of the boys in my investigation even claim to have gained by changing about ; at the very best, the boy is seeking in a blind, shiftless fashion for "something that suits him." [1]

Sir George Kenrick, Chairman of the Birmingham Education Committee, recently stated :—"Personally I do not attach very much importance to a young lad going

[1] In their Memorandum for the Poor Laws Commission, Messrs. N. G. Chamberlain and E. V. Birchall give it as their opinion that "a nomadic career is often the sign of a hard-working ambitious boy who is eagerly on the look out for the moment when the experience gained in one shop will bring him increased wages in another." In such cases the boy would have what the writers call a "consecutive career," *i.e.* he would go from shop to shop in the same line of employment. It is noticeable, however, that less than a quarter of those having more than two situations had such "consecutive careers" ; and it seems probable that a majority even of these changed from other motives than the one alleged. It is a pretty obvious thing to stick to one line of work, and it does not at all mean that the youth doing so is really seeking all-round experience. Only three youths of all those I investigated had anything approaching a "consecutive career," and only one claimed any gain by the changes he had made. Even he admitted that his first year was one of complete disregard of his future (p. 15, A. L.'s career).

through several occupations before settling down to the one which will be his main employment." And he added :—" What seems to be important is that he should be under efficient control in any occupation in which he may be engaged." [1] But the obvious retort is, " How can the boy possibly be under efficient control if he is drifting from one occupation to another ? " Surely efficient control is only possible, as we recognise in the legal indentures of the apprentice, if there is some sort of permanent and effective bond between master and boy. So long as the boy is free to leave his job whenever the employer attempts to exercise discipline over him, how can there be efficient control ? The prevalent industrial conditions, offering to every lad an ample choice of employments, make control impossible. The boy knows that he is master of the situation, and, boy-like, he takes full advantage of his knowledge. He is encouraged to be careless and independent and irresponsible by the conditions which make a change of jobs so easy. And each change he makes is a further unloosening of the habits of obedience and discipline which the school has laboriously fostered in him. It is true that if he is to do unskilled work, it does not much matter whether he does two or three kinds of it, or only one kind. But what does matter very gravely is that he should acquire habits of self-control and self-respect, that the Change of Jobs inevitably serves to undermine. It is certainly the opinion of the employer that the boy who has had several jobs is less efficient ; and such a boy's chances of adult employment are jeopardised by a nomadic juvenile career. The boy himself knows this well ; and at the Exchange he makes every effort to conceal the number of his jobs. On the other hand, the boy who has been fortunate or sensible enough to stay in one place, has probably acquired habits of diligence

[1] Report of the Commercial Education Committee of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, February 20th, 1913.

and regularity, as well as " a good character," which will be invaluable to him in seeking employment as an adult.

Descriptions of Industrial Conditions by Boys Themselves.

We have seen that the boy is in most cases condemned to uneducative employment for the bulk of his waking hours; and that the conditions of work contribute nothing—less than nothing—to his physical and moral unfoldment. This can perhaps be most vividly realised if we let a few of the boys speak for themselves concerning their own careers :—

I. H. V. of class I. (p. 17).

First job.—At large Wood Mills; two months; hours, 8 to 6. " Having to saw wood up into different sizes. And hammering different kinds together."

Second job.—At a small Jeweller's; eight months; hours, 9 to 6 (on the average). " Had to run errands and fetch the gilding."

Third job.—At large Paper Works; eight months; hours, 8 to 7. " Just had to keep the engine-house clean and stoke the boilers and help the engine-drivers and run several errands."

Fourth job.—At a Printer's; six or eight months; hours, 8 to 7. " Just having to lay paper in the ledges to keep up with the machine at an average of 1000 to 1500 an hour."

Fifth job.—At a large Silversmith's—(has been here some months); hours, 9 to 8. (See Diary on p. 110.) The boy is now learning a trade, and the contrast to the previous occupations is vivid. He says with pride :— " I learn something fresh every day. I work with a man and he shows me what to do, and I do it if I can."

2. M. R. OF CLASS II., GROUP A. (p. 31).

First job.—At a Silversmith's; eighteen months. "My first job was a Silversmith, which I may say I did not like at all. The boss was a man on his own, so he found it hard at times when their were not so many orders about. Of corse when he was very buisay I had not much time to learn anythink on account of having to run errands which kept me on from morning to night. The work was not very hard as it was a sitting down job, but he could not pay me much money so I had to leave him after serving eighteen months."

Second job.—At a Sawmill; two months. "My next place was T.'s, the saw mills which was ten times worse, not being use to hard work I found it hard carrying heavy planks of wood. I met with an accident there, as I was carrying some timber a carpenter opened a trap in the floor, not being aware of it in time I fell hanging from a nail by the heel of my boot very nearly falling on some belting which was going on at the time, it was a bit of luck that I was not smashed to pieces. My mother would not let me go back, I didn't learn anything whatever there."

Third job.—At a Cabinetmaker's; one year. "The next was a cabinetmaker's, which I liked very well only they run short of work, and not having much experience I was not able to get another job in that line."

Fourth job.—At a Brass Foundry; two weeks. "After the Cabinetmaking I was at a Brass Foundry, I was piece-work there but left on account of prospects of a better job."

Fifth job.—At an Electrician's; three weeks. "The next was an electrician. I did not cair for that very well, it was only wireing at the Theatre, and only lasted for a few weeks. The job was very dangerous to any body not use to scaffolding or being high up. Once wile I was helping to fit a light at the top of the building I all most lost my ballance and fell to the bottom."

Sixth job.—At a Football Factory; twelve months

" After that I was in the football line that was a easy job which not require much skill. I was learning stiching but that job was taking up by femail hands and of course they soon took the shine of it the stiching is done by an awl on to needels being passed through the leather. On account of them refuseing to give me a rise I was forsed to leave after serfing 12 months."

Seventh job.—At a Brass Founder's. " I am back at the same brass founders now only under another man. This place is not up to much, but not so bad, but am looking out for somethink better. The work I do is filing drilling and emery. You could pick up any of these in three weeks.

3. K. L. OF CLASS II., GROUP B. (p. 47).

First job.—At a large Parcels Delivery Place ; eighteen months ; hours, 9–15 to 11 or 12. " My first job was at P.'s where I had to go with a van and help to deliver parcels. I would go at about 9–15 in the morning and clean the horses harness after my mate would come at 10 o'clock. We would go, collecting Parcels until half past Eleven o'clock then we would start on our delivering Journey round about Sutton Coldfeild where I would take the out of the way parcels. It was a nice job in the Summer but too cold in the Winter besides I had not used to be done until 11 and 12 o'clock."

Second job.—At a Gun Factory ; twelve months. " One day my brother told me they wanted a youth for polishing at his factory I went on my way to work and I called in the place where I started. The job was all-right and I liked it for I had to Polish Gun Fittings' on an emery bob. First I would do them on a rough bob then on a grese bob and then on a glaze bob. When I had no polishing to do I used to do blueing which was a stove on the top there was an iron slab on this was some dust and charcoal mixed this is red hot I get some pliers

put some work in the mixture cover them over and then I have to keep on pulling them out and looking to see if they where done. the reason I left was because I had not got enough work and I had to leave. It did not take me long to learn. The hours were from eight in the morning till seven in the evening."

Third job.—At a Coach Harness Manufacturer's; two weeks; hours, 7–6. "It was a very large factory the hours were from seven till six what I had to do was fetch the lumps of brass off turn buttons on an Emery Wheel. It was like a small grindstone being similar to the Polishing."

Fourth job.—At a Metal Factory; eight months (see p. 115). "This machine is worked with a treadle. First of all I undo the coil and then the wire is pushed thro' a small hole in the side of the machine to a distance of about $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches which is stopped by a piece of iron. Then with my foot I push down the treadle cuts the wire which is bent into shape by a woman on a press."

Day after day, month after month, and year after year, the boy is spending a good two-thirds of his waking hours in the monotonous, unelevating and often demoralising ways that we have been considering. This would be of less consequence if the other third of his time were given over to a training for adult life for which adolescence should be the natural preparation. But we have already seen that the boy's leisure is mainly devoted to the Picture Palace, the Music Hall, Cheap Literature, Football Matches and the Street. These provide no education for mind or body. They merely assist to aggravate the inefficiency which existing industrial conditions so readily produce. They serve to make the boy capricious, unsettled and emotional; whereas the qualities he needs for success in his work are dependableness, steadiness and strength of mind.

The Transition to Manhood.

My investigation was concerned only with the three or four years immediately subsequent to schooling; but it would seem essential to an adequate treatment of the subject to consider to some extent what happens to the youth during the Transition to Manhood at 18 or 20. It is, indeed, this phase of the question that has mainly concerned investigators and impressed the public.[1] The metaphor of a blind alley, legitimate only in respect of a fraction of boy labour, and even then of doubtful accuracy, has been so popularised as to convey the suggestion that it is the crux of the whole Boy Problem. We are presented with a picture of an innocent school-lad, marching hopefully forward along the industrial highway, looking neither to right nor to left, and then suddenly finding at 18 or 19 that he is in no highway at all but in a cul-de-sac. The wicked employer turns him off with hosts of others; and the Poor Law or the Distress Committee is left to make provision for him. We are confronted with pages of statistics showing that "the proportion of boys to men (in factories) makes it inevitable that only a small minority are absorbed." [2]

The Majority Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws remarks:—"One point bearing upon the question of casual labour, which strongly impressed us, is the extent to which boys leaving the Elementary Schools are drafted into work which lasted only a few years and then flung out, unskilled and untrained, into

[1] Cf. Introduction, p. 1 et seq.

[2] R. H. Tawney, Evidence before the Poor Law Commission, Appendix, Vol. XX. 96610 (10). Cf. also 96610 (11). Mr. Tawney suggests that I should have "made rather more of the connection of Juvenile Labour with Unemployment," which he thinks I have tended to minimise too much. If this is so, I would urge in defence that it is almost inevitable in combating an exaggerated point of view to over-elaborate the arguments on which one's own view is founded.

the casual labour market." [1] And in the recent Report of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, a general reference is made to "evils which now exist owing to the manner in which boys on leaving school are put into cul-de-sac occupations." [2]

The term "blind alley" is not infrequently employed as equivalent to "unskilled," but we have already seen that the bulk of boys' work, as of men's work, requires very small capacity. Thus it is almost meaningless to speak of blind alley work, because in this sense almost all work is blind alley. The phrase was of greatest appropriateness in its application to the messenger boys employed by the Post Office, who were, until recently, turned off at the rate of several thousands a year on reaching manhood.[3] These lads were in only the one occupation until they were discharged. But, as we have seen, only a small percentage of youths remain in one place after leaving school, and of these it is probable that scarcely any are turned off. They are the apprentices and learners, recruited from the better-class scholars, who are in firms where they have good prospects of continuous employment. But the bulk of the boys migrate from one job to another, so that for them the phrase blind alley loses a great deal of its appropriateness.

We may, perhaps, say that such classes of work as that of the van-boy, page-boy or errand-boy must come to an end with the dawn of manhood. This is true. The boy cannot go on with boy's work. But he is in no more of a blind alley than the majority of boys who at 18 have learned nothing that will guarantee their industrial future. The only satisfactory fashion in which we can use this term seems to be by way of

[1] Majority Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws, Part IV. Chap. X. § 545.

[2] Report of the Commercial Education Committee of Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, February 20th, 1913.

[3] Cyril Jackson, "Report on Boy Labour," Appendix I. c.

differentiation between one firm and another. There are, for example, two large neighbouring firms doing the same class of work in a street in Birmingham. The one invariably promotes its errand-boys to the bench; the other dismisses them. Till recently the railway and other companies usually discharged their van-boys, but now these are almost all absorbed into other branches of the work.[1] It is the same with the boys occupied in the various kinds of low-skilled and labouring work in factories and workshops.

To discover how far boys are engaged in blind alley work, that is, in firms which sack them at 18 or 20, would require, therefore, an extensive canvass of all the employers in the city. And even then the statistics would be unreliable.[2] It is impossible to tell exactly whether the employer dismisses the boy; or whether the boy, apprehending dismissal, or hoping for better-paid adult work, takes himself off. The everlasting movement of boys from place to place makes it very difficult to discover whether the employer or the young man is the responsible party. Moreover, those employers who were most guilty of a parasitic use of boys would be just the ones least willing to acknowledge it to an investigator. Practically every employer I have questioned has replied that he "never gets rid of a good boy!" and could do with more of them. It does indeed seem true that Birmingham is freer than most towns from any considerable discharges of boys at the close of their youth. In the recent Report of the Central Care Committee it is stated that "The demand for boys has been particularly heavy in the Engineering, Brass, Jewellery and Silversmith's trades, all of which offer

[1] Cf. Report of Departmental Committee on Hours and Conditions of Employment of Vanboys and Warehouse Boys, 1913.

[2] Cf. Mr. Cyril Jackson's "Report on Boy Labour," p. 26. "In reading over the returns of employers one has been much impressed by the facts that the answers to this question varied infinitely, even when the facts dealt with were very nearly identical."

employment of a permanent character. Birmingham has, of course, an extraordinary variety of employments, and offers openings in nearly every trade except the textile. It is comparatively free from occupations for boys which are purely "blind alley," and which offer no prospects of continuous work." [1]

This does not, of course, mean that most boys can get skilled work, but it does mean that Birmingham industries are able to absorb most of the boys employed. The belief of the Labour Exchange officials and of Care Committee helpers is, that the demand of firms for boys who will stay on with them as men is greater at present than the number of boys who can be persuaded to enter and remain in such openings.[2]

What is obvious concerning the Transition to Manhood is that the overwhelming majority of boys—well over 95 per cent.—are absorbed as men. If it were not so, we should have vast armies of young men loafing at corners or holding unemployed demonstrations about the streets.

Mr. Cyril Jackson has given us a chart based upon the industrial careers of a miscellaneous collection of 135 Birmingham lads. Accepting it as roughly accurate in outline, we find about the same percentages of boys are employed at 14 as at 20 in offices (11·1 and 14·9 per cent.) in low-skilled factories (20 and 19·4 per cent.), and in general and casual labour (23 and 23·8 per cent.). The percentage of errand-boys drops from 30·4 at 14 to nothing at 20. But, on the other hand, we see that "skilled trades" [3] take only 8·1 per cent. at 14 and 28·4 per cent. at 20.[4]

[1] First Annual Report of the Central Care Committee of the City of Birmingham Education Committee, 1913, p. 15.

[2] One of the largest and best firms in Birmingham, which makes every provision for the training and benefit of its boys, informs me that about three-quarters of these lads who are taken on (picked boys) break away from them.

[3] This term, as used in Mr. Cyril Jackson's Report, may not bear quite the same connotation it carries elsewhere in this study.

[4] "Report on Boy Labour," p. 48.

Without going further into details, we may accept this as a fairly accurate picture of the relative distribution of boys in occupations at the beginning and end of adolescence. The main obvious inference of this table is that the skilled trades absorb the bulk of the errand-boys ; and this is well known to be true. " With regard to messengers, it should be clearly understood that in Birmingham, in many factories, boys are usually put to purely messenger- or errand-boy work for the first three to six months, this errand-boy period being but the first step in his factory career." [1] These figures and charts, however, give us no indication of the multifarious interchange of occupations that goes on all the time between boyhood and manhood ; nor do they show us to what extent the *same boys* go on in the same employments as men.[2]

No statistics exist—and it is perhaps impossible to accumulate them—which will give an accurate general picture of what happens in this or any other town between the years of 18 and 22. It is plain that most juveniles are absorbed as men, and in most cases in the same general employments. Most clerks and skilled workers keep their places. Many others will remain with the firms that employed them at 17 or 18. But a considerable number, probably as many as a half of the total, will change their job between 18 and 22. And we have to note that this transition is different in *kind* from the previous Changes of Jobs.

The youth on the verge of manhood awakes to the seriousness of his position. His parents grumble at him for not bringing home more money. He begins to think in earnest about marriage. He believes himself entitled

[1] First Annual Report of the Central Care Committee, 1913, p. 17.

My inquiries incline me to believe that the period is often considerably longer.

[2] The same objection applies to the forthcoming detailed Census returns (see p. 177, note).

to an adult wage, and in many cases throws up his job and refuses offers of others, because he "won't take kid's wages." But the instant he prices himself at man's value, the economic sky changes over his head. The "kids" whom he despises, fresh from school, are better and cheaper workers than himself, and the employer therefore takes them on as far as their numbers allow of it. But he himself now enters the adult labour market, which is overstocked with low-skilled workers like himself. It was only because he was cheap that he was so readily employed as a boy. As a man, he finds no such accommodation in the labour market. "The intensity of the demand for men varies almost inversely with the intensity of the demand for boys." [1] Those parasitic firms which depend on boys, without intention of absorbing them, pour out a stream of juveniles; a certain number of street-traders endeavour to find a place in regular wage-earning; there is a constant immigration of young men, especially at this age, from other parts of the country. And, while it is plain that most youths become reabsorbed in industry, it seems to be also a fact that a certain number get squeezed out. This is the universal testimony of those who have investigated the subject. The proof lies in the records of the young men who apply to the Distress Committee [2] and the Recruiting Sergeant.[3]

The net result appears to be that for every ninety-five places open to men in the ranks of industry at 19 or 20, there are some hundred applicants. The employer is no longer at the mercy of the boy; the young man is at the mercy of the employer. "There are numbers of young men who remain at boy's wages after they have reached manhood, because they see no opening and fear to lose the little they are earning." [4] Others indignantly

[1] R. A. Bray, "Boy Labour and Apprenticeship," p. 174.
[2] Cyril Jackson, "Report on Boy Labour," p. 12.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 13 and pp. 48 and 49 (Chart F. and Table 18).
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 16.

refuse "kid's wages," and drift about for months seeking a job where they can get wages that will satisfy them. A long spell of unemployment is frequent during the Transition to Manhood. Its end is usually the acceptance by the boy of a rather poorly-paid job in unskilled work. In other cases he drops into casual labour. In any case, this period of drifting and of unemployment serves as the completion of that Manufacture of Inefficiency which it has been our purpose to trace. We find that also in this Transition-period there tends to occur a weeding out of the least efficient youths. The gates of industry close upon the smaller and more weakly, the less intelligent and forceful young men. Such are the lads whose careers were described in Chapter IV., and of whom unemployableness was predicted. There is, of course, no rigid selection, but it seems certain that in the competition for places, the least efficient tend to get rejected. These take to the streets and to casual labour; they provide much of the material for the problems that concern the various agencies connected with relief, crime, disease and mental deficiency.

Those who escape this fate, persist in normal wage-earning occupations, as inefficient unskilled workers. Their inefficiency acts as a clog upon every wheel of industry. And they themselves are condemned by it to lives of abhorrent poverty from which nothing but their own improvement can give them power to emerge.

CHAPTER IX.

REMEDIES.

The Evils to be Remedied.

Under existing social and industrial conditions, the mass of the working-men of this country are growing up to manhood incapable of discharging their duties as workers or citizens. Whether those conditions are satisfactory in themselves is a question beyond the purview of this investigation; what is not disputed, however, is that the youth of this country are suffering under them to so marked an extent, that public action in the matter has become urgently necessary. Such action cannot take the course of altering in their general features either the social or the industrial structure upon which society is at present based; it can only concern itself with such modifications as will ensure to the nation's youth preparation for the functions of adult life.

Adolescence is intended by Nature as the period during which the boy should learn to become a man. This is Nature's purpose, and any contravention of it can lead to nothing but disaster. As a matter of fact, we find that these precious years, instead of being used for training, are stolen for the immediate profit of industry. The youth is employed for his "present commercial utility"[1] (these are the words of an employer), and

[1] See R. H. Tawney, Memorandum to Report of Consultative Committee, p. 313. Cf. also Mr. Cyril Jackson in the *Edinburgh Review*, Oct. 1912, article on "Apprenticeship," p. 416.

his needs as a future worker and citizen are overlooked.

The upper classes, from remote times to the present day, have never failed to devote the whole period of adolescence to fuller education ; and it seems unquestionable that as democracy becomes more powerful, such a utilisation of the time of youth will become general. Unfortunately we cannot propose such heroic remedies at the present time. Every change that is made in the social or industrial order provokes far-reaching reactions, which may suffice to undo the benefits purchased by the initial reform. And even if there were no such danger to be apprehended, we must recollect that sweeping changes require both money and political force before they can be carried into effect. The most we can do is to suggest such reforms as might reasonably be embodied in a legislative programme.

The existing evils, that remedial measures must be designed to counteract, seem to be six in number :—

1. The bulk of the work done by boys requires little or no skill, and is in itself uneducative.

2. The hours of juvenile labour are so long as to make it impossible or difficult for the boy to continue his education in his leisure ; their effect being, in fact, to drive him into contact with undesirable social influences, which tend to demoralise him.

3. The work required of the boy is, in most cases, of a nature that does not develop his physique healthily or adequately.

4. Contact with other youths and men in his employment has in a very large number of cases a deteriorating influence upon the boy fresh from school.

5. The frequency with which the boy can and does change his jobs renders him unstable in character, makes effective supervision impossible, and makes him " suspect " to employers when he becomes a man.

6. On reaching manhood the youth has no guarantee

of permanent employment; he is not infrequently turned from his job on demanding adult wages; and in any case he finds himself unable to command a wage sufficient for the needs of a comfortable life.

Uneducative Labour Unavoidable.

In framing remedies for these evils it is essential to bear in mind that, as regards the first of them, it is on the whole unavoidable. Owing to the industrial and mechanical developments referred to in the previous chapter,[1] the greater part of the work of the world must be uneducative and low-skilled. We may abolish without much difficulty many boy-occupations. But whatever substitutions we may make will not alter the fact that the boy can, as a rule, learn nothing of value *through* his work. We are told that the apprentice worked in such a way at his handicraft that he trained body, mind, and character. But at the present time the number of "Gelehrnte Berufen" (or "taught trades") open to boys is relatively insignificant. And it seems absurd in the face of historical developments to talk of reviving handicraft or reinstating the old system of apprenticeship.

It may, indeed, eventuate that much-needed developments of machinery will require a larger number of highly trained mechanics; and that the ordinary workman-mechanic of the future will need more training and intelligence than he possesses to-day. But, unless the essential features of industrial and social life are obliterated, we must abandon any expectation that boys can find education in work itself. The intelligence and character of the adolescent must be trained outside the workshop.

[1] Pp. 161–168.

The Statutory Reduction of the Hours of Juvenile Labour.

The only means, in fact, by which we can secure training to the growing youth is to limit the number of hours during which he may be used for commercial profit. Such a Reduction of the Hours of Juvenile Employment is the fundamental remedy on which all others depend. It is preliminary to any solution that will secure results commensurate with the urgency of the problem. The boy cannot get training, physical, intellectual or moral, in the work in which he is engaged. The only possible means of securing the unfoldment of his nature is to provide for this outside his working-day. To what extent the Reduction of Hours should be carried is a matter upon which there is the widest difference of opinion among investigators. These are differences occasioned, however, not by any division of opinion upon the needs of the adolescent ; but, by a varying estimate of the practical considerations involved. The Consultative Committee to the Board of Education suggest "five or six hours a week at the outside" [1] as the time that should be taken from industry and devoted to education. Such a halting reform will be insufficient to meet the requirements of the adolescent. He is subject, as we have seen, to social and industrial conditions which influence his development adversely to the most serious extent ; [2] and we have to make his personality strong enough to withstand these unfortunate circumstances. We must build up his physique, his intelligence and his character. We must train him for industry, the home and the State. Unless the youth is set free from wage-earning for a considerable part of his time, it will

[1] Report of the Consultative Committee to the Board of Education, p. 178.

[2] Chap. VII., on Social Influences.

be impossible to send him out into the world sufficiently trained for manhood.

What is essential in the first place is the absolute prohibition of wage-earning, accompanied by whole-time elementary education, up to the age of 15. The youth of 14 is far less capable of choosing his occupation wisely than he would be a year later; and statistics show that "the age of 14 represents the year of greatest indecision and maximum drift." [1] This year, moreover, is the one in which the susceptibility of the youth to external circumstances is greatest.[2] It is, therefore, of supreme importance that his emergence from the school to the workshop and the world should be delayed for another year.

In the second place there must be a reduction of the hours of juvenile labour to a maximum of (say) thirty per week, between the ages of 15 and 18.[3]

It seems certain that sooner or later industry will be forced to set the boy free sufficiently for the greater demands of the community as a whole. But it is certain that such a change can be secured only by compulsory legislation. Here and there an employer will be found to provide education for his boys. Birmingham can provide the celebrated example of Messrs. Cadbury Brothers, who make physical training and continued education compulsory for all their army of juvenile workers. The firm reports that "the renewed energy resultant upon the attendance at these classes fully repays them for the time lost by the boys." [4] It seems unquestionable that it would actually pay employers to give time off to their employees even for mere recreation; but the ordinary employer is neither far-sighted nor wealthy enough to

[1] R. A. Bray, "Boy Labour and Apprenticeship," p. 146.
[2] Chapter on Adolescence, pp. 105, 106.
[3] Cf. Minority Report of the Poor Laws Commission. R. A. Bray, "Boy Labour and Apprenticeship," p. 197 et seq.
[4] Report of the Consultative Committee to the Board of Education, p. 99.

carry out such reforms. As we have seen, he is harassed by the need for an immediate profit; he is under the unceasing strain of competition; and he is therefore forced into employing boys merely for their "present commercial utility."

In the City of Birmingham especially, with its hosts of small employers, it is idle to expect that industry will reform itself even to the extent of releasing the boy for educational purposes. The Birmingham branch of the Workers' Educational Association circularised employers, asking them, among other questions, whether they would consent to "give prizes to workpeople who attended classes or reduce their hours of labour." [1] We are told that "only 50 per cent. agreed," and it is certain that only the more reputable employers would be canvassed in such an inquiry. Moreover, even where a firm would be willing to give time off, it would never grant more than a few hours per week, nor would it allow that time to be used except for some form of industrial training. Everywhere in Birmingham we find boys being employed up to (and often beyond) the full legal limit; those firms which really encourage education, or make provision for it, are the exceptional ones, and usually those engaged in jewellery or engineering, or other forms of industry where the technical training of the worker is required.

Messrs. Norman Chamberlain and E. W. Birchall, summing up the results of an inquiry made in the City for the Poor Laws Commission, state:—"Practically all employers concurred in saying they encouraged boys to attend Evening Classes; very few give any time off for the purpose, however, so their lack of popularity is hardly surprising." [2]

So far, every limitation of the hours of labour has

[1] Report of the Consultative Committee, Vol. II. p. 414.

[2] Memorandum, Appendix VI., to Mr. Cyril Jackson's Report on Boy Labour, p. 176 (Appendix, Vol. XX.).

been carried through by the State, usually in the teeth of the bitterest opposition from the manufacturing classes. It is the opinion of almost all those acquainted with the subject, and the admission of many employers themselves, that legislation alone can secure any general reduction of the hours of labour.[1]

The need for compulsory legislation is the more urgent because, as we have seen, the parent and the boy both acquiesce with the greatest compliance in the present system of things. The boy, urged by his parent, will go to the firm which pays him well, even though its hours are intolerably long. The employer wants the labour; the parent wants the money. The boy is unaware of his own needs. Nothing but legislation is strong enough to extricate the youth of the nation from the tyrannical grasp of these circumstances.

Compulsory Continued Education.

Still more certain is it that the community as a whole must provide the Continued Education which a Reduction of Hours will make possible. Very few employers are in a position to give such education. Still fewer are willing to make the provision. The most that employers have done so far is to grant facilities to their lads to go to classes provided by the local authority. Nor can we expect that voluntary agencies will step in to supply the need. Their services may be utilised in any national scheme, but it would seem chimerical to think that voluntary societies can undertake the work of training the 30,000 juveniles who are now needing

[1] Report of the Consultative Committee, p. 135. "Thus among this large and representative body of witnesses, there is a majority of two to one in favour of the principle of compulsion." More than a third of these witnesses from whom the Committee took evidence were employers. The Committee state their own conclusion on p. 131:—"It is virtually impossible to provide a remedy for this evil without further statutory limitation of the hours of work."

education in Birmingham. We have seen that they fail to touch the bulk of the boys in the City, and that it is the very ones whom we wish to reach that they find it most difficult to influence.[1] The Municipality of Birmingham—in common with every other progressive town—has, in fact, recognised that it must provide educational faculties itself; and every effort has been made to extend and improve the Technical and Evening Classes of the City.[2] Whatever educational schemes are drawn up to meet the needs of adolescence must be administered through the machinery of the local authority. But such schemes must be compulsory, not permissive. The local authority is an administrative and not a legislative body, and should have no power to make, or refuse to make, laws on so grave a matter. In many districts employers form so powerful a section of the council as to be in a position to frame by-laws more consonant with their own interests than with those of the public. The State must insist on the general outlines of its schemes, including a maximum of hours of work and a minimum of hours of continued education. But the details of the education itself, and of the machinery for providing it, are matters which the local authority, familiar with local needs, can best decide for itself.

We have next to consider what education is necessary to meet the requirements of the juvenile up to the dawn of manhood. Elementary Education, as we have already noticed, fails to-day, not because it is defective in itself, but because it is not supplemented by the training for which it has prepared the child.[3] It is true that further reforms are necessary, but these lie in the direction of making the Elementary School more efficient in its present activities, rather

[1] Chap. VII., p. 128 et seq.

[2] Report of the Consultative Committee, Vol. II. pp. 483, 559; Report of the City of Birmingham Education Committee for the year ending November 1912, § 111, p. 65.

[3] Chap. V., on the Boy at School, pp. 90–92.

than in modifying the curriculum. The training of the child for adult life is a burden which must be imposed on the years of adolescence, and which cannot be achieved during childhood. The proper function of the Elementary School is to provide the child with the instruments of further education, which are, in the main, physical health, the three R's, and the power of learning.

It would seem, as regards Continued Education, that undue stress is now being laid upon the need for technical training. The President of the Board of Education, speaking at Bradford on May 12th, is reported to have said:—"It is to technical education that we must look to tap the great reservoirs of the country."[1] A leading daily paper, reflecting accurately public opinion upon this question, heads one of its columns "What to do with our boys; how they may join the army of skilled workers."[2] The proposals made by both the Majority[3] and Minority Reports of the Poor Laws Commission seem to be vitiated by too great a regard for "technological training."[4] The Arbeitschuler (Work Schools) of Munich are frequently cited as examples of "the result of diverting boys from casual employment to skilled trade employment." This may be possible in Munich, which is specially favoured in skilled openings,[5] but the problem in Birmingham and other great industrial centres is that only a limited number of boys—certainly not more than one-third—can enter industries which require any considerable technical training. As Professor Urwick stated before the Poor Laws Commission:—"Artificial attempts to counteract these tendencies by diverting increased

[1] *The Times*, May 12th, 1913.
[2] *Daily News*, February 10th, 1913.
[3] Majority Report, Part IX. (25) (*a*), § 128; Part VI. Chap. IV. § 550.
[4] Minority Report, Part II. Chap. V. B. (i). Cf. Report of the Consultative Committee, Vol. I. p. 114.
[5] Report of Consultative Committee, p. 149. "The factory system is comparatively undeveloped."

numbers of boys into skilled trades cannot be expected to produce much result." [1] In fact, if we develop specialised technical training to any great extent, we should be in danger of over-stocking the labour market with skilled workers, who would find it exceedingly difficult to turn to other occupations.[2]

It is true, as we have seen,[3] that there is a certain shortage of skilled workers in many trades, and it is of the utmost importance that this deficiency should be remedied. Upon the supply of highly trained men, capable of taking advantage of every opportunity of developing our methods of production, depends the industrial future of the nation. "The real secret of success," said Lord Haldane recently, "lies not with the owners of capital, nor with the unskilled workmen, but with the large and increasing band of highly technical people." [4] Sir H. Frederick Donaldson, giving this year's Presidential Address to the Institution of Mechanical Engineers, stated :—

"There appear to be two desiderata for meeting this competition. (1) Our quality of output should continue to be superior to that of our competitors. (2) Our selling prices should be if possible, actually, but at any rate relatively, lower than theirs. The former of these demands that the machinery and the appliances should be the best of their kind, that the men engaged should be fully qualified from their personal skill for their use, and that the association of these two should be most closely effective. The latter requires that the methods of doing the work of production should be organised on the highest lines of efficiency, having special regard to the avoidance of waste of either material or energy." [5]

[1] Report of the Royal Commission on the Poor Laws, Appendix Vol. IX., 96921 (9).

[2] Cf. Mr. Cyril Jackson's Report on Boy Labour, p. 12 (cf. also the Reports of the various Distress Committees).

[3] Chap. VIII. pp. 201, 202.

[4] Speech to the Eighty Club, April 4th, 1913.

[5] The Institution of Mechanical Engineers; Address by the President, Sir H. F. Donaldson, K.C.B., April 18th, 1913, p. 13.

From the side of industry no sacrifice could be too great to secure a supply of what Sir H. F. Donaldson goes on to call "men highly trained both scientifically and practically." [1]

But such training is already being provided. Institutes and Technical and Trade Schools are already meeting to some extent the demand made of them by the boys of superior capacity who require special training. Much remains to be done, but the need is so patent that industry may be trusted to supply the necessity itself, as it has already done, for example, in the case of the Jewellery Schools in Birmingham.[2]

But when we look at this problem, not from the side of industry, but from the side of the boy, we see that developments of technical training are only of limited usefulness. The superior boys push out for themselves; already more than three-fifths of the Secondary School pupils graduate from the Elementary Schools; [3] and they form the students of the various continuation classes now open. The problem with which we are concerned lies in the lack of training of the boys who are not first-rate in capacity and who form the bulk of the nation's youth. Their requirements do not lie in the direction of any specialised technical training for their work. But, if numbers count for anything, their needs deserve consideration as urgently as those of their more fortunate competitors.

These are the boys with whose fortunes this study is

[1] The Institution of Mechanical Engineers; Address by the President, Sir H. F. Donaldson, K.C.B., April 18th, 1913, p. 14.

[2] "A voluntary system may catch the apprentice, but it cannot catch the labourer. For the self-interest of the employers is enlisted on the side of technical education for apprentices. But no one has any interest in seeing that the "mere labourer" attends school—no one, at least, except the public which at present supports him with relief" (R. H. Tawney, Memorandum to the Report of the Consultative Committee, p. 318).

[3] 60·9 is the exact percentage of "Free" and "Fee-paying" ex-Public Elementary School Pupils. *Vide* Report of the Board of Education for 1911 and 1912 [Cd. 6707], p. 14, Table A.

especially concerned; and it is to the nature of their education that we have to turn our attention. Industry, while it may serve its own ends in securing a supply of efficient skilled workers, cannot be expected to give even these any training except in industrial capacity. And it would be idle, as well as unjustifiable, to expect of employers any education of the mass of the unskilled workers.

But the nation, looking to industrial efficiency as a whole, and having in mind other considerations than those of business, is obliged to take in hand both the fuller training of the apprentice and the continued education of the unskilled workers. It is suggested that the general scheme of education, here elaborated, is as appropriate to the needs of the future artisan as it is to the needs of the unskilled worker, and that only in their industrial training is there any need for differentiation.

The purpose of the education given the adolescent is to bring him into the most intimate relations possible with his environment as an adult. We have already seen that it is impossible for the Elementary School to train the child to enter into relations with its adult environment. But adolescence is the period of growth that Nature has provided for this purpose. The environment, into the mysteries of which we desire to initiate the adolescent, includes three main features—Industry, Home, State. We have to train the youth of this country for their duties as workers, as heads of households and as citizens.

The great danger of the present time seems to be that if any further education is secured to the growing boy, it will be of a merely industrial and "banausic" character. It was in reference to this possibility that Lord Haldane said recently: [1]—

"It is not the only side, nor is it the highest side, nor even the most convincing side; the highest side and the most

[1] Address delivered at a Supper of the Workers' Educational Association, April 22nd, 1913 ("The Highway," Vol. V. p. 162).

convincing side is the side which appeals to the best elements in people and which puts before them education as something not confined to this or that phase of spiritual life, which does not limit itself to training to this or that attitude, but which seeks to develop and to make them citizens of the highest type, men and women who take that large view which shows to them their neighbours as themselves, and shows them in the common life of the city something that causes them to put forward the utmost endeavour that is in them."

Adolescence has other and greater claims upon it than that of industry.

On the other hand, it is obvious that industrial needs should claim a considerable portion of the time of the boy between school and manhood. Industry will profit by the increase in the lad's efficiency ; and he will himself, on arrival at man's estate, be in a position to command a higher wage as a well-trained worker. But, as we have already noticed, any sort of specialised training is useless for the lower grades of industry.

Peculiar aptitudes and particular forms of dexterity requiring special training are not required ; all that is necessary can be easily picked up by the worker who has received an all-round education. We cannot train for a trade ; but we can enable the worker to do his duties as thoroughly as possible, so that he will facilitate by his efficiency every conceivable improvement in the methods of production. Such a training would give a thorough familiarity with the ordinary tools of the workshop and with simple machines ; it would include a grounding in mechanics ; it would teach the lad to be a competent draughtsman. But it is obvious that even from the side of industry the desideratum is not so much any special industrial training as a good general education. " Those faculties which are trained by general education are ever rising in importance." [1]

What is required of the low-skilled worker is that he

[1] Professor A. Marshall, " Principles of Economics," Book IV. Chap. VI. § 4.

shall be energetic, intelligent, careful, resourceful, trustworthy and adaptable.[1] His work makes no heavy demand upon his skill; but it can be done well or ill according to his general capacity. It is this development of all-round efficiency that we require in the ordinary workman, and it can best be secured by a general education.[2]

As to the nature of the continued education that should be given to the future unskilled worker, there is scarcely a hint in all the existing works upon Boy Labour. The latest writer upon the subject remarks :—" We have hitherto never seriously considered the training of the unskilled labourer, and much pioneer work of an experimental character remains to be done." [3] Mr. Bray himself, however, in common with all his predecessors, confines his suggestions almost entirely to technical training.[4]

The suggestions here put forward are based, as true education must be, upon the needs of the boy himself. It is his nature, at this period of growth, that must determine both the things to be taught him and the way they are to be taught. His industrial training is of fundamental importance, because upon it will depend his adult wage-earning power; upon which depends in its turn the supply of the material necessities of life. But the boy is greater than a mere tool of industry. He is to be a husband and a father, and the member of a great society. The responsibilities which these functions carry with them demand training even more urgently

[1] Cf. W. H. Beveridge, "Unemployment," p. 124. "The characteristic effect of the industrial structure is to make adaptability essential. The characteristic effect of advancing years is to destroy adaptability."

[2] Cf. Prof. A. Marshall, "Principles of Economics," Book VI. Chap. IV. § 2 and § 5. R. H. Tawney, Report of the Poor Law Commission, Appendix, Vol. IX. 96766. R. A. Bray, "Boy Labour and Apprenticeship," p. 210.

[3] R. A. Bray, "Boy Labour and Apprenticeship," p. 220.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 207–221.

than does the industrial function. Efficient fathers and efficient voters are surely as vital to the well-being of a community as efficient workmen. The justification, therefore, for including any subject in the curriculum of the continued education will be that it supplies a definite need of the adolescent, and so fits him for adult life. Nothing should be included that will not stand this test. And if this criterion is sound it means that our educational machinery must be so extended as to provide specially for this great class of boys.

The affiliations of the Secondary School are with the University rather than with life itself; and the whole secondary system is, and perhaps should be, based on the assumption that the pupils (or, at any rate, many of them) will proceed to further education at college. This tradition is so strong that it would seem impossible to overcome it.

But the lads we are considering need a utilitarian training for their life at 19. They do not require a bookish education which will enable them to join the middle-classes or enter the professions. They will not even join the higher grades of manual labour. It seems obvious that there is a need here for the creation of Institutes which will give these boys a training specially adapted to their own needs, and free from the academic traditions of our Secondary School system.

The education itself must proceed along the lines that adolescent growth necessitates. In the first place, the period is one of marked physical development in all directions. It is a period in which, however, adverse physical conditions will produce most baneful effects, while a favourable training can produce most marked results.[1] The work of the boy offers, as a rule, no scope for the building up of physical health, upon which all the activities of life so greatly depend. Here, then, we have the first fundamental

[1] Chap. VI. pp. 96–98.

suggestion for continued training. It must supply the boy with a well-developed body. It must train the fundamental muscles that are left untouched by his work; it must develop the lung-capacity, straighten the backbone, train the hand and the eye. Substantial objections may be raised to military training on ethical grounds, but it would seem to offer the most hopeful suggestions for the sort of physical development the youth needs at this period. And, on the other hand, if it is the wish of the nation that we should establish a citizen-army, this surely is the period when every boy might be given sufficient training to bring him up to the standards of the Territorial Force. Swimming, wrestling, boxing, running, jumping, gymnastics, perhaps even dancing, ought to form part of the boy's normal education. Organised games, as valuable morally as physically, and peculiarly adapted to the "gang-spirit" of adolescence, ought also to find a place in the curriculum. Accompanying such a training there might well be instruction in physiology and hygiene and the principles of First Aid.

It would seem also that gardening might be taught to every boy, and that no instruction would have more salutary social effects.

Above all, there ought to be definite instruction at this period in matters relating to sex. For the sake of the boy himself, as well as for the future of the race, it is supremely important that at this age, when the sex-instinct becomes obtrusive,[1] the boy should learn what it means, the dangers of its abuse, and such other knowledge as can be given by a sympathetic teacher or medical man.

Physical education ought to occupy a considerable part of the time set free from wage-earning; and this, combined with the industrial training already suggested, would serve most effectively to develop the boy's char-

[1] Pp. 98–100.

acter and intelligence. It is, however, important to teach the boy to use the instruments of knowledge, the powers of reading, writing and speaking, which he should have acquired in the Elementary School. This is the time when every boy might reasonably be expected to learn how to speak plainly and connectedly; and to write a good letter or composition. Above all, the passion for reading, which usually becomes intense at this age, might easily be utilised for good novels, biographies, and histories, which the adolescent would learn to love as much as he now revels in the halfpenny comics and the penny dreadfuls; from such reading, which could be silent and (within reasonable limits) self-chosen, the boy would take his standards of value, discover his heroes and form his ideals. A wise use of the Cinematograph might be made a most valuable adjunct to this general education.

And, finally, while the direct teaching of ethics is of doubtful efficacy, there might well be instruction upon the responsibilities and duties of citizenship. Within three years of completing his course at the Institute, the youth will be entitled to vote; and as we have seen,[1] he is, at present, hopelessly ignorant of political and social questions. It might not, perhaps, be ill-advised for us as a nation to admit to the franchise only such men and women as can pass a reasonable test in matters which every voter ought to know. To include the teaching of civics and economics in the over-burdened Elementary School curriculum is impracticable; but it could easily be taught in the Continuation School to those just about to graduate into citizenship.

Such, in outline, is the education that might be given to the future low-skilled worker. It would be given him just at the time when Nature renders him peculiarly susceptible to educational influences; when senses and

[1] P. 159.

emotions and imagination are all at their keenest ; when his higher nature is in its infancy, and when, above all, he needs the strengthening of reason and of self-control. Such an education would do more for him than all his previous ten years' schooling ; and it would complete his Elementary education, the effects of which are now almost nullified by the subsequent lack of training. "To civilise a nation," says Tolstoy, "you need three things—schools, schools and schools." Until we have learnt that lesson, and are prepared to give education as freely to the poor as to the rich, we shall continue the Manufacture of Inefficient Workers and Citizens. Nothing less than has been here suggested will suffice to rescue the oncoming generation from the evil influences that beset the youth of to-day.

Supplementary Remedies.

Adolescent Training, made possible by the Reduction of Hours, will not cut off the stream of undesirable social influences to which the boy is exposed ; nor will it change his work so as to make it educative to intelligence or physique. But provided it is sufficient, it will so build up his personality as to enable the lad to rise superior to the many unfortunate circumstances of his environment. It will lift him out of relations with many influences to which he now unthinkingly attaches himself, and make it far more easy for Churches, Boys' Clubs and all such voluntary agencies to reach and influence him. If he chooses he can still fritter away his evenings in loafing round the streets or in patronising the Picture Palace and the Music Hall. To-day this is inevitable, because the demoralising influences out-number so disproportionately those that are elevating. But in the future, when the State provides continued training, it will be the fault of religious and philanthropic agencies if they fail to influence the mass of the boys of this country.

We have to remark, however, that Adolescent Training will not in itself deal with the three other evils which were mentioned earlier in this chapter. These are :—(*a*) The unfortunate influence of older youths and men in many boy-occupations ; (*b*) the Change of Jobs ; (*c*) the difficulties of the Transition to Manhood. Continued Education will, of course, build up the boy's character in such a way as to decrease the harmful influence of the workshop ; it will make him steadier and less likely to change his jobs idly ; and it will make his prospects as an adult more promising. But we must look elsewhere for a more adequate solution of these problems.

It is to be noticed, first of all, that they are all largely beyond the reach of direct legislation. No laws can purge a factory of language and habits that corrupt the boy, because these are things too intangible to be reached by legislation or inspected by officials ; nor can laws make a boy stay in one place ; or force a firm to absorb him when he becomes a man.

To deal with these three evils we need in each case the co-operation of the boy and the employer. It lies within the employer's power to protect the boy from corrupting influences ; this needs nothing but the determination of the firm to keep its workshops clean morally, and to make sure that the foremen are those who will enforce this resolution ; many firms already secure this result, to the great benefit of all concerned.[1] Supposing the boy to be dependable, the firm in most cases can and should induce him to stay with them by offering a progressive wage and promising certain adult employment at adequate remuneration. Wherever this successful bargain was struck between employer and boy, we should do away with the evils of Change of Jobs both during adolescence and at the Transition to Manhood. It

[1] Cf. Paper prepared for the City of Birmingham Central Care Committee on "Information concerning certain Trades for Women and Girls," p. 3.

would not perhaps be impossible to revive apprenticeship in this modified form.

It seems plain that the solution of many of the evils connected with this problem rest with the individual employer and the individual boy. What we need to do is to *educate* the employer and the boy ; to effect a steady increase of the number of employers who will make themselves responsible for the superior and continuous employment of the boys in their charge, and of the number of boys who will remain in the good openings found for them. The raising of the school-leaving age will make it far easier to discover what work the boy is fit for, and so ensure his getting into suitable employment at the outset of his career. It then rests with the Care Committee Helper to influence the boy to stay in his place, unless urgent reasons arise for leaving it.

The machinery already existing in Birmingham is admirably adapted to the work of placing boys and awakening a sense of responsibility in parents, juveniles, and employers. Three months before the boy leaves school, the teacher sends a form to the Care Committee, giving the essential particulars of the boy's career and capacity. At the same time (well before he leaves school) a helper visits the lad and his parents, and tries to get the boy to register at the Exchange in time for the officers to find him a satisfactory place before he leaves school. After this the helper endeavours to influence the boy to do his best at his work and remain steadfast in his job. The Birmingham Scheme, moreover, under the Choice of Employment Act, makes the local Education Committee, and not the Board of Trade, the dominant authority in the supervision of juveniles. This facilitates the appeal, which is being successfully made, to civic patriotism ; [1] and it should be possible to do much to awaken employers

[1] *School Child and Juvenile Worker*, November 1912, p. 11, article by Mr. Norman Chamberlain on "A Scheme under the Choice of Employment Act."

to their responsibility in this matter. No amount of placing or supervision will transform unskilled work into trades; but the activities of the Exchange Officers and the Care Committee Helpers can transform many hitherto unsatisfactory firms into such as will look after their lads, and provide for them at manhood.

The Effects of the Proposed Remedies upon Industry.

The removal of the whole juvenile population of this country from wage-earning for one-half or one-third of their time, is a reform which cannot fail to cause dislocations in the industrial system. Such dislocations have been caused by every reduction in the hours of child labour that have been made during the last century. In each case it has been prophesied that the change can never be made; or that, if it is made, industry will not survive the shock. But in each case the irresistible Stream of Tendencies, which bears us all onwards, has at length swept away all obstruction; and industry has always recovered from the disturbance, and survived, more vigorous than ever. Sooner or later, it is certain that the years of adolescence, as well as those of childhood, will be used for a greater purpose than "present commercial utility"; and compared with the resultant benefits to the people as a whole, the temporary disarrangements caused to industry seem almost negligible.

The most satisfactory feature of the reduction of the hours of Boy Labour is that it will fall most severely on those firms and occupations that make an illegitimate and parasitic use of Boy Labour. No firm has a right to use a boy for one season only of the year, or for a few years of his life, and then cast him adrift at the expense of the community.[1] Such firms will find their supply

[1] It is interesting to note that "In Victoria, under the Trade Boards, youths of 16 must be paid the full rate earned by

of cheap labour cut short ; it will, moreover, be the work of Care Committee Helpers and others, to warn boys off seasonal and blind alley firms. Whereas firms which treat their boys justly, and absorb them into their own employment at manhood, will find it far easier to get suitable lads and to keep them. The reduction of hours will have varied effects upon every trade, and even upon every firm. If it is accompanied by the abolition of certain of the most undesirable boy occupations (*e.g.* van-boy labour and street-trading), this will make the available supply of boys less restricted for good employments. It would be easy in many cases to arrange for double shifts for boys ; in many forms of work, women [1] or old men could be advantageously substituted for youths.[2] But it would appear inevitable that the reduction of hours would be mainly met by two methods, each of the utmost benefit in itself.

In the first place, it would lead to the employment of more adult male labour. The Minority of the recent Poor Laws Commission recommended the "Halving of Boy and Girl Labour," not as a reform to be made for its

men unless they are really being taught a trade. Also, the number of male apprentices and still more of male improvers is strictly limited so as to prevent the fraud of employing youths at low wages under the pretence that they are being taught." Article on "The Minimum Wage," by Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb, Supplement to the *Crusade*, November 1912, p. 200.

[1] Most of the employers with whom I have spoken in Birmingham say that for most kinds of work in factories they prefer girls or women ; and if we are faced with the alternative of putting a boy or a girl into a "blind-alley" job it would be better to choose the girl whose industrial career in most cases terminates at womanhood in marriage.

[2] Cf. on this point Report of Miss Durham on Juvenile Labour in Germany to the Education Committee of the L.C.C., p. 3. Speaking of Berlin she says :—"The newspaper boy and the child street-trader are unknown. Where a van or cart is sent a van-boy is unusual. If a second is carried on a van, he is usually a man. The telegraph and messenger services are performed by men (usually ex-soldiers), not by boys." Old men and girls are now being employed in Birmingham instead of errand-boys, the supply of whom for blind-alley firms is said to have been greatly reduced by the efforts of the Care Committee Helpers.

own sake, but as a means of solving the unemployment problem.[1] There are at all times, even in the brightest periods of trade, some millions of men who are totally or partially unemployed. Their unemployment is partly caused by the existing supply of cheap boy labour. If this supply were reduced, it would automatically lead to the absorption of far more adult males into continuous employment.[2]

In the second place, the difficulties placed in the way of using boy labour would lead to a greatly increased use of machinery, which is now held back because the employment of boys is more immediately profitable. The thoroughgoing use of machinery is to-day essential to success in industrial competition. Nothing would more stimulate its introduction and development than the making of human labour more expensive or difficult. Professor Chapman laid stress upon this point in giving his evidence before the Consultative Committee:— "The removal of children," he urged, "would, however, provide a stimulus to the improvement of machinery."[3] This would be a development which the employer would be the more ready to make, because he would find his younger workers competent to handle the machinery he introduced.[4]

Here, indeed, we reach the final argument, from the

[1] Minority Report, Part II. Chap. V. B. ("The Absorption of the Surplus") (i) ("The Halving of Boy and Girl Labour").

[2] In a certain number of cases, forming, however, a relatively small fraction of the whole, boy labour is so interdependent with that of men as to preclude the possibility of his working half-time, etc. The remedy here is obviously to take on adult men in place of boys, and pay them a man's wage for what is usually a man's work.

[3] Report of the Consultative Committee, p. 600.

[4] Cf. again Professor Chapman's evidence before the Consultative Committee, Vol. II. p. 601:—"There was at present a relative over-supply of unskilled labour, and this was keeping back the introduction of more complicated machinery. If the employer felt he could get an adequate supply of intelligent labour, he was much more likely to try experiments with machinery." Cf. also Chapter VIII. pp. 165–168.

industrial side, in favour of the extension of juvenile training. Every employer in Birmingham with whom I have conversed on the point has complained to me of the serious inefficiency of the lads he employs. This defect can be remedied by the training of the boy outside his working hours, and in that way alone. And the resultant gain to industry and to the employer will be considerable.[1]

Effects upon the Parent.

We have already seen [2] how great is the economic pressure exerted by the poorer working-class home upon the adolescent. The earnings of children at school are relatively insignificant compared with the earnings of the boy in full-time employment. And the risk of intensifying gravely the poverty of the country is a far more serious danger than any dislocations that may be caused to industry. Mr. Bray believes that:—" . . . from the parent's point of view, there is nothing to hinder us in raising the school age to 15, prohibiting the employment of school children, and instituting a new half-time system (to 18)." [3] This verdict seems to me to be too optimistic. Some suffering will inevitably be caused by the reduction, even by a third, of the time in which boys can earn wages. But there is no need to exaggerate this loss. We must remember that the boy will still be earning for half or two-thirds of the day; that he will be a more efficient worker; and that as the supply of boys will be scarcer, his value in the Labour Market will rise. Suffering will be inflicted only on the poorest homes; but it should be remembered that such homes are every year recipient of more and more assistance at the hands of the State.[4] It would be a legitimate ex-

[1] Report of the Consultative Committee, Chap. VI. § e.
[2] Pp. 170–173.
[3] R. A. Bray, "Boy Labour and Apprenticeship," p. 207.
[4] *E.g.*, Free meals, clothing and boots for the school children; Old Age Pensions for the aged; Free Medical Treatment, etc.

tension of State activity to make a subvention (perhaps in the shape of meals to the adolescent) in cases of great hardship. What is evident is that unless we somehow break the vicious circle of :—Poor Parents—Poor Children —Poor Parents Again, we shall never lift the mass of the people from poverty to comfort.[1]

Effects upon the Boy.

The remedies suggested have been made with the boy's needs in mind. It has become a platitude to-day that the growing generation has the greatest claim upon the community ; and no apology is needed for treating this problem from the point of view of society and the adolescent rather than from that of industry. The reforms outlined would develop the boy's health, intelligence and character ; they would fit him to fulfil duties he owes to his employer, to his wife and family, and to society ; and they would increase his chances of happiness by removing from his personality many of the existing sources of vice, disease, error and failure. It seems unquestionable also that the increase in the youth's efficiency would lead to a steady and progressive increase in the wages he would be able to command. In what proportions the general increase of wages and profits, consequent upon improved industrial efficiency, would be shared among the recipients of both, is a matter upon which it is unsafe to prophesy.[2] It seems certain, how-

The removal of so much Boy Labour from the market will, moreover, lead to more continuous employment and larger wages for many parents.

[1] Cf. Mr. Cyril Jackson, "Report on Boy Labour," p. 9 :— "... the remedy is, of course, higher adult wages; and it may be that if we can prevent the waste of the boy's powers in premature work he will as a man be worth these higher wages and the present vicious circle may be broken." Mr. Jackson also notes ("Unemployment and Trade Unions," p. 58) the important point, that "by supplementing the family income they (boys' wages) *obscure the fact that adult wages are insufficient.*"

[2] Cf. Report of Consultative Committee, p. 176.

ever, that the increase in the efficiency of the working-classes would enable them, both individually and collectively, to demand higher wages than the present untrained workers. The worker is at an economic disadvantage to-day because the labour market is overstocked with untrained men. The employer never finds it difficult to get second-rate workers. The removal of large numbers of boys would increase considerably the demand for adult labour, and increase, at the same time, the worker's power of striking a remunerative bargain with the employer. The sanction will never be given to a general minimum wage unless the efficiency of the working-classes warrants the demand. But immediately the workers of this country are sufficiently educated, industrially and generally, to make the demand justifiable, the community will not be slow to satisfy it. Many employers, perhaps most, would be willing to share justly the increase in their profits, resulting from the increase in the efficiency of their employees.

Results to Society.

Each day sees an increase in the number of those men and women who look forward hopefully to a social order freed of much of the poverty and disease, ignorance and wretchedness, that characterise existing society. It is impossible to forecast the features of that coming state of things or even to predict in what manner existing social conditions will be transformed. But our knowledge of Nature's slow processes of evolution, of historical development, and of human nature itself, seems to emphasise the conclusion that changes in social conditions can only take place gradually, and in response to the expanding personalities of human beings. It is only in so far as the masses of the people themselves become finer in physique, stronger in intellect and nobler in character that they will be enabled to shape the con-

ditions of society to satisfy their larger aspirations. We cannot see what transformations the future will effect. What, however, we can see clearly is that safe and true progress will depend upon the character and intelligence of the oncoming generation. The generous training during adolescence of the workers of this country will go far towards building up that more competent race of men and women. It will secure in our own time a measure of happiness infinitely outweighing any sacrifice we are called upon to make ; and it will enable our children to solve the problem of the future in a manner that will put our petty efforts to shame.

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THE Bibliography here appended is the English section of a complete Bibliography being published for the United States Bureau of Education, in a book called "The School and the Start in Life: a Study of the Relation between School and Employment," written by Mr. Meyer Bloomfield, Director of the Boston Bureau of Education. I put at Mr. Bloomfield's service the long but unfinished list of references I had myself collected, and in return he has courteously allowed me to make use of his completed Bibliography. The list here given is, I believe, almost exhaustive for the literature dealing with the problem of juvenile labour in this country up to the summer of 1913. For references to authorities covering the subject in other countries, the student should consult Mr. Bloomfield's work.

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